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OUR BOYS



IN CHINA



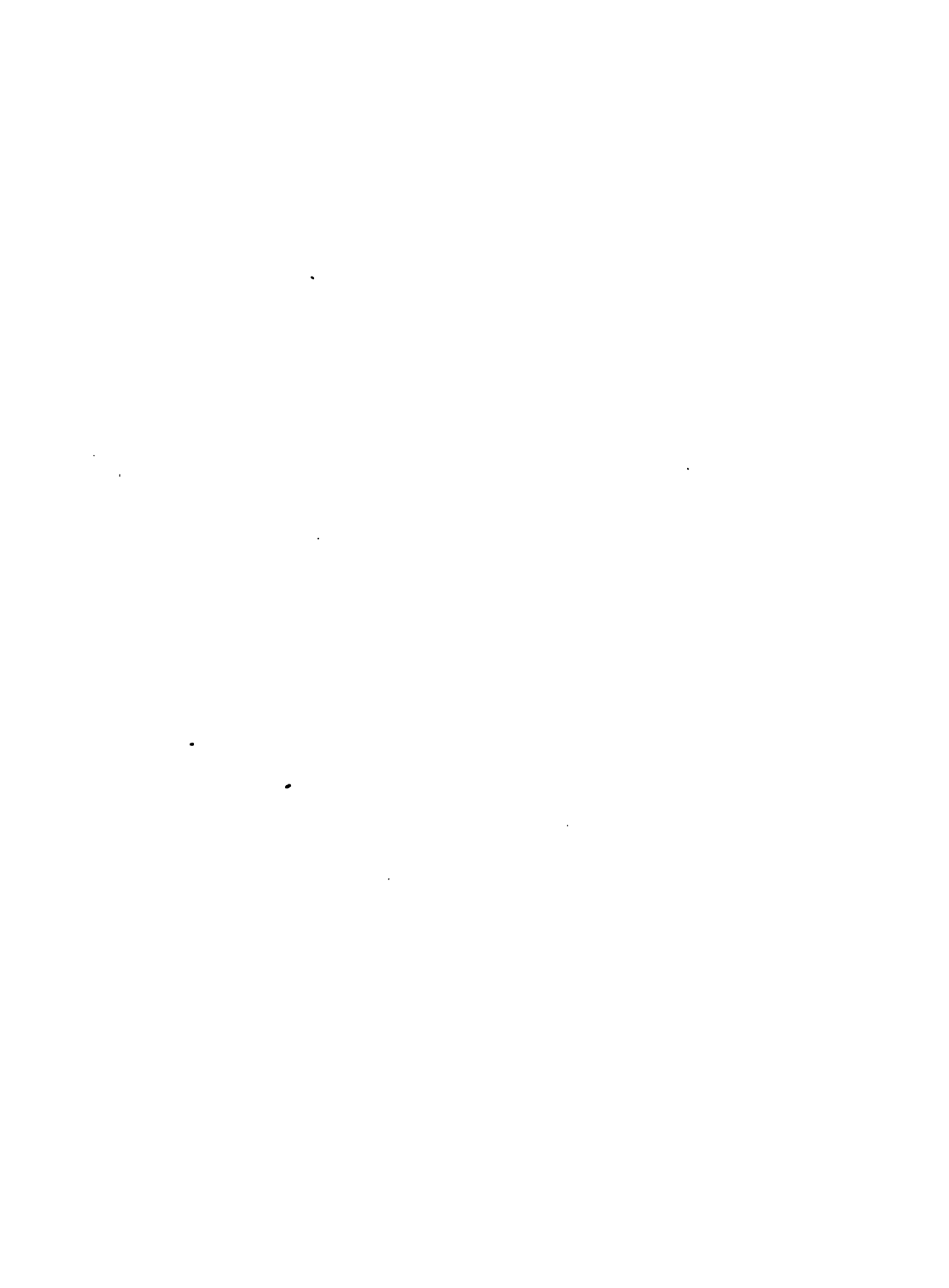
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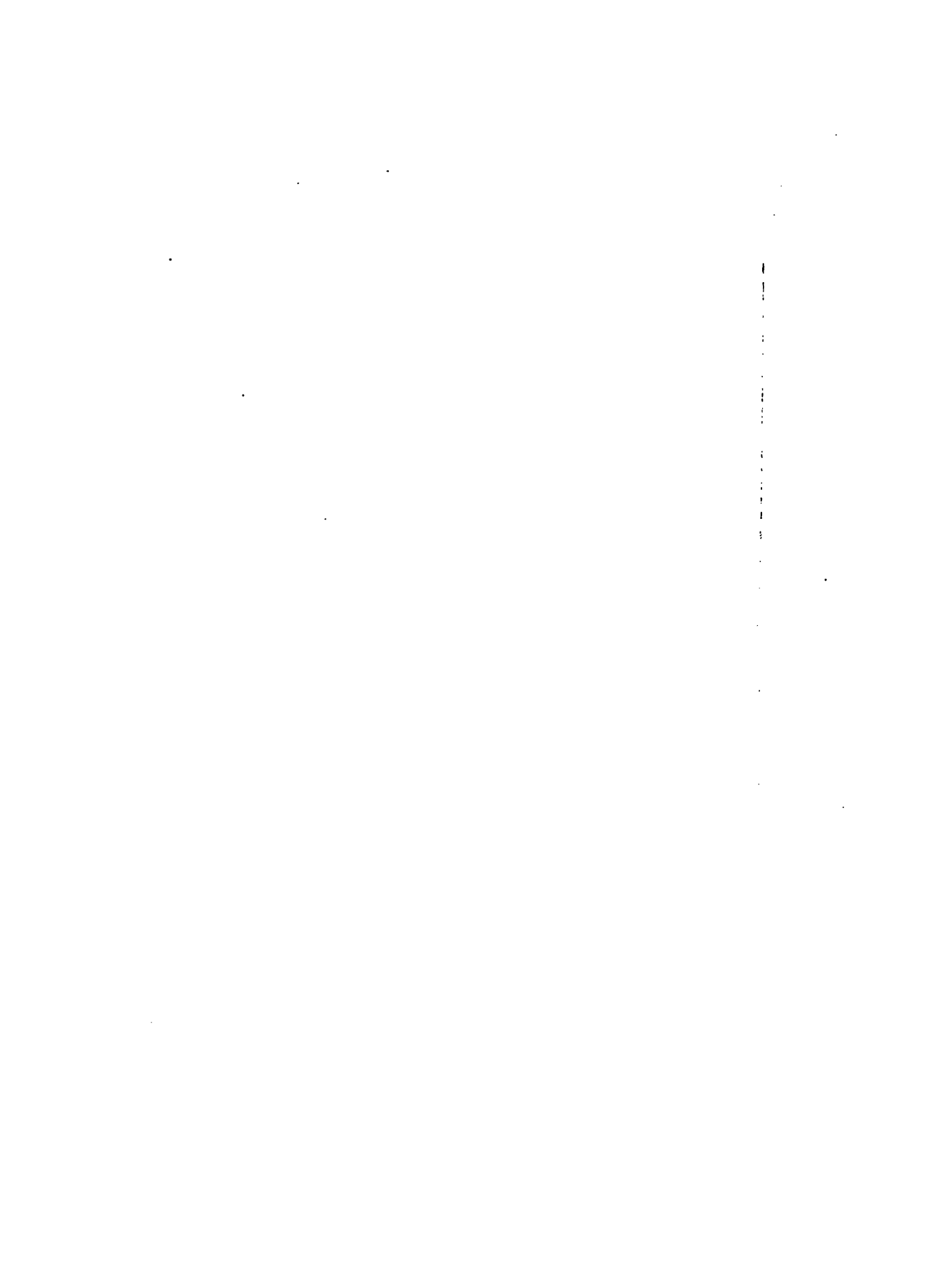


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IN THE CHINA SEA.

OUR BOYS IN CHINA

THE THRILLING STORY OF

TWO YOUNG AMERICANS

SCOTT AND PAUL CLAYTON

WRECKED IN THE CHINA SEA, ON THEIR RETURN
FROM INDIA, WITH THEIR STRANGE ADVEN-
TURES IN CHINA

BY

HARRY W. FRENCH

AUTHOR OF "OUR BOYS IN INDIA," "GEMS OF GENIUS," "EGO,"
"CASTLE FOAM," "NUNA, THE BRAMIN GIRL," ETC.

With One Hundred and Eighty-eight Illustrations

BOSTON

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Dedication.



TO MY SISTER

"GEORGE,"

WITH THOUGHTS TOO MANY FOR WORDS

HENCE WITHOUT THEM.



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INTRODUCTION.

WHEN we left our boys in India, bidding farewell to the wharves of Calcutta from the deck of the steamer "Tigress," they were apparently beyond any adventures except the passing pleasures of ordinary travellers, and the author's work seemed finished. But when the Bengal Bay was crossed, from the beautiful island of Ceylon to its lovely miniature, Singapore, and when the peninsula of Malacca was rounded, and the typhoon in the China Sea and the evil genius of India appeared upon the scene, and the stanch "Tigress" went down, a total wreck; when the boys found themselves alone in China, with chance after chance carrying them deeper and deeper into its dangers, its wonders, and its mysteries; when for three months and more they wandered in strange and often fascinating surroundings, — now for a time not knowing where the next morsel of food was coming from, or, indeed, if they were not upon the very threshold of some terrible death, and again suddenly found themselves literally monarch of all they surveyed, little princes under the powerful protection of one of the most influential men of China; when sickness came, and the great Chinese dragon seemed ready to swallow them up; when the magic web which Paul was forever weaving around every heart about him brought China to his little feet, where India had been before, — a web which every one who will can weave, and which will bind a friend or foe faster than any chains of authority, — when all this transpired, it began to seem that the author had not completed his work after all, and the fact that so many young people were reading about the boys in India concluded the argument that he follow their footsteps through China. Here is the record, such as it is. They did not see in China just what some eyes have seen there, but I think they saw just as


truly, and because they found some good things, and some thoroughly admirable things, it does not at all follow that China cannot become better than she is. But this is the last of their wanderings. We leave them in safe hands, and hereafter they must speak for themselves.

To our boys, and those who have taken such a kindly interest in them, the author must say farewell, trusting that his brief exploration in youthful literature may, at least, have done no harm.

WHITE MOUNTAINS, Aug. 31, 1883.

W. W. W. W. W.
Dec. 25th 1883.

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OUR BOYS IN CHINA.

CHAPTER I.

GONE.

“**T**HE steamship ‘Tigress,’ Capt. H. G. Parker, with the royal mail from Calcutta for Hong Kong, a total wreck. Passengers, cargo, and steamer all gone. Two seamen alone survive.’

This is what Richard Raymond read in a newspaper one morning; a paper which had just arrived with his Calcutta mail. He read it as he sat upon the broad veranda about his beautiful home in Puna, among the hills, beyond Bombay. He read it and started to his feet, with a shudder too deep for words to have expressed its meaning. The Hindu boy lying on a mat at his feet looked up in utter astonishment, for his master was not often excited.

“Impossible!” Mr. Raymond exclaimed, a moment later. “Yes, it is impossible! It cannot all be true. He who marks the sparrow fall did not protect our boys in India to forsake them in the China Sea. But I must do something and do it at once!’

For more than a month, while actively engaged in unraveling a most serious complication in government affairs, Mr. Raymond's thoughts had still been following close upon the track of his young friends, Scott Clayton, who was fifteen years old, and his little brother Paul — or Hari-Paul as he would



RICHARD RAYMOND'S HOME.

have it, in memory of a Hindu Muni Dhondaram, — now nearly seven years old. The two boys had passed through many strange experiences in India,* and trials that proved stirring schoolmasters, almost making men of them, young as they were. But there was something so gentle, after all, in the hand which India had extended toward them that both the

* Our Boys in India.

boys, with sad eyes and aching hearts, saw the wharves of Calcutta disappear.

With equal regret Mr. Raymond had stood upon the wharf, watching the royal mail steamer "Tigress" sail down the Hoogly River, toward the Bengal Bay, bound for Hong Kong,



FAREWELL TO CALCUTTA.

bearing the two boys who had so strangely and suddenly become very dear to him.

The huge steamer moved slowly through the muddy water of the Hoogly River. There was bright sunshine everywhere, and a heavy, double awning over the deck. Hindu sailors, directed by European officers, were slowly dragging huge cables and heavy ropes along the decks, stowing them away, for, though the steamer stopped at Madras and Ceylon, Penang

and Singapore, before reaching the coast of China, there was, among them all, but one wharf where she could make fast. All the rest offered her only a harbor where she could come to anchor, and a navy of leaking row-boats called jungs, dungs, sampans, and many other names, as curious as the boats themselves, with any number of half-naked boatmen ready to row the passengers ashore.

Down the river banks were mounds of ill-colored brick and kilns everywhere. Some of them were smoking like vast bonfires, while the natives moving about them looked more like ghosts than real men, for all about the brick-kilns rose a soft, yellow dust, like a cloud of amber mist.

Hari-Paul, with eyes that had been trained by Dhondaram to be ever on the alert, suddenly discovered a dozen dark spots in the water, following close behind the steamer.

"Crocodiles!" he cried, pointing to the tips of the black noses.

"They're nothing but mud-turtles!" replied Scott, with a show of dignity as older brother. His life in India had not brought him so much under native influence as was the case with Paul, who, without a word, threw a sweet lime he was eating as far behind the steamer as his little hands could force it, and suddenly, as it struck the river, a dozen great jaws flew into the air, and the muddy water washed over a dozen wriggling tongues, anxiously waiting for something, only to be disappointed.

"Great Cæsar!" exclaimed Scott, drawing himself back. "When did you ever do that, Paul?"

"I never did," replied Hari-Paul, "but it's time you knew the difference between a turtle and a crocodile."

"He's an old un fur his years," said a quartermaster, with

light brown hair and blue eyes, nudging Scott and pointing to Paul with a weather-beaten thumb. "He's Yankee, I reckon. I'm Yankee, too; come frum Salem."

"Salem!" cried Scott, catching the bronze hand and clasping it firmly between his palms. "Our home is in Beverly, and our windows look right over to The Willows of Salem."



"CROCODILES!"

He paused, for a tear was trying to find its way down the rough cheek of the blue-eyed quartermaster.

"Home's a good name, lad," he said, solemnly. "Home's a name that hain't none like it; an' Salem — yes, yes. Salem's on the sea, an' we're on the sea. Nobody knows; maybe ye'll look over to The Willows some day agin, an' my old mother lives there."

“What makes those crocodiles follow the steamer so?” asked Paul, who had been intently watching the creatures in the water; and the quartermaster, ashamed that he had shed a tear, tried to atone for it by putting on his roughest side and answering with a laugh.

“They’re a waitin’ fur some o’ these black heathen aboard to fall into the water; an’ shiver me, but I wish they might mess on the whole black crew.”

Paul turned suddenly. There was a fire in his eyes, caught from the Muni Dhondaram, as he faced the stalwart quartermaster and asked, “What if God had made you black?”

The quartermaster turned away, having made a friend of Scott and an enemy of Hari-Paul, almost in a single breath. He turned away like a coward; he was afraid of the little Yankee who was old for his years.

Down the river the “Tigress” sailed and out into the sea; but the yellow water of the Hoogly extended far into the Bengal Bay. Scott, with his frank and affable nature, soon found friends enough among the officers and passengers; but Hari-Paul, with a weight upon his little heart, which even he himself hardly understood, shrank from those who approached him, and found his happiest hours in watching the native crew at work. He said but little to them, but now and then a word in their own language as they passed him on the deck found its way into hearts that few supposed existed under their turbaned heads and beneath their bare dark breasts. Neither of the boys was inclined to leave the steamer when she stopped for two hours at Madras, but they watched the long breakers which always reach an enormous height, rolling up that sandy beach, and the curious boats, so long and narrow and high, which alone could withstand them.

"See those people going on shore," said Scott, as a party from the steamer, one by one, balanced themselves on the narrow seats. "See, Paul, their feet are a yard above the bottom of the row-boat."

"They'll not be a yard above the *water* in the *bottom* of the boat before they reach the shore," said an officer standing near them.

"And that's why the boats are made so high?" asked Scott,



THE LAST LIGHTHOUSE.

"That's why, my lad."

"Well, why are the houses of Madras so far from the shore?" Scott asked a moment later.

"Because there's no shore that you can depend upon," replied the officer. "It's a long reach of open sea from Madras to Malacca, and when the monsoon changes it sometimes changes into a typhoon for variety, and then they catch it well here at Madras. There was a gale here last year which left one hundred and fourteen craft, large and small, high and dry on the sand there. It took down every house within a mile of

the water, and landed one large ship a quarter of a mile beyond the usual high-tide reach."

"I should hate to have a cottage by the sea in this neighborhood," observed Scott.

When the steamer started again Scott took Paul into their state-room, and with a solemn and serious air, which was quite adequate to the occasion, he made this declaration:—

"Paul, this package which Mr. Raymond gave me is worth thousands of dollars; it is more precious than everything else that we have; we must keep this if we lose everything else. If anything should happen to me before we reach America, be sure that no one else touches this package. There are papers which prove that papa was not connected with the terrible bank robbery, and which fix it all right about the stolen money and everything. Don't you see how precious they are?"

"I do," replied little Paul, as solemnly, and instinctively he made the Hindu sign of reverence to the wonderful package that his brother disclosed, carefully sealed and carefully hidden in the darkest corner of his trunk.

Scott began to think himself a man under such a weight of responsibility, and as for Hari-Paul, he was sure that he was a man, and when we are most sure of such a thing we are the most likely to find ourselves mistaken.

The next morning, when Paul entered the state-room after breakfast, he found Scott sitting on the floor before the open trunk. He was pale and trembling.

"What is it, Scott?" cried Paul, falling on his knees beside his brother, and Scott could only groan,

"The package! The package! It is gone!"

CHAPTER II.

THE QUESTION.

THEY sat upon the floor together, and Scott cried bitterly. Paul stroked his cheeks at first and tried to comfort him, but it was too much for the little fellow, and soon he was crying as hard as his brother. These two boys, who thought themselves magnificent little men twelve hours before, found there was something of the child left there after all.

“It’s no use,” said Scott, “I’ve tumbled everything all over in my trunk a dozen times and it’s not there. It’s gone!”

“But if it’s gone, some one has taken it. It could n’t fly,” suggested Paul.

“But *who* took it?” Scott asked, almost fiercely.

“That’s the question,” Paul replied, knitting his little brows that were never formed to frown. “I don’t like that big man that wished the crocodiles would eat up the sailors.”

“Oh, he’s a real good man, Paul! He’s a quartermaster of the steamer, and these rough fellows have awful soft hearts, sometimes, I tell you. Did n’t you see him cry when he spoke of home and his mother?”

“Maybe he ought to cry,” said Paul. “I don’t like him.”

“But I know he did not take it,” Scott added vehemently. “I believe it was that rascally Chinaman who makes up the beds. He was just outside the door when we went out, after we talked about it, yesterday.”

“He can speak Hindustani,” said Paul. “I will ask him.”

“Ask him?” muttered Scott, scornfully. “And perhaps you think he would tell you.”

“Perhaps he would,” replied Paul, with something like dignity in the way he tossed his little curly head; and leaving his brother he went in search of the Chinese boy (for every servant is called a boy) who cared for their state-room, as a chambermaid might on an Atlantic steamer.

Scott still sat upon the floor when the missionary came in and listened to the story of the unfortunate loss. His first advice was to report at once to the captain, but upon considering that the papers stolen could be of no possible value to any but the rightful owner, he said,—

“Let us wait, for the present. Something may transpire to solve the question. They may be returned as worthless. If we should make a great disturbance about them, it would only advertise their value, and whoever has them might hold them the longer on that account. Let us wait for a day or two and watch.”

This seemed the wisest plan, and they went on deck together, to do the *waiting*, while little Paul, all on his own account, had gone out among the sailors to do the *watching*.

The “Tigress” was skirting the coast of Ceylon. There was the brightest of bright sunshine everywhere; the bluest of clear blue sky above, and the deepest of deep blue sea beneath. Far away was the dense, green coast of that island of islands where the spicy breezes blow and where every prospect pleases, but Scott leaned on the rail without seeing the bright picture, for an obstinate lump in his throat and a heavy weight that seemed resting upon him made everything gloomy and dull. At the time when he thought he was to complete his pet wish to be a hero, and crown his home at Beverly Farms with its

old happiness again, by returning with little Paul and the precious papers, he found the sudden loss too much for him.

Stately palm-trees lined the coast. The blue waves about them were flecked with silver foam, and from wave to wave, as the steamer plunged into them, hundreds of flying fish rose to the surface to bound over the little snow-capped mountains and then dive into them, so soon as their wings became too dry for them to fly. Beyond the palm-trees rose the hills which formed the highland chain through the centre of Ceylon.

But Scott turned away in distress. He found his blue-eyed quartermaster off duty, leaning on the rail forward and puffing upon an old clay pipe as weatherbeaten as himself.

"D'ye know that was the real garden o' Eden, lad?" the quartermaster asked, nodding his head toward the beautiful island.

Scott paused, almost reluctantly. It sounded very much as though he were about to hear the *first* chapter in the story of the missions there, which his protector had omitted when he began with the visit of the Jesuits, or else some sailor's joke which the seamen in these waters are very fond of perpetrating upon the astonishing credulity of the passengers who sail these seas.

"Did n't know it, eh?" the sailor asked.

"No, nor you either," Scott replied, thinking of the way old Joe had caught him more than once when steaming down the Red Sea, a few months before.

"Fact," returned the sailor, resting his chin on his hand and rolling his little stub pipe about to a more convenient position in his mouth, where the teeth were worn down into a groove by clinging to it through many a fierce gale, — "fact, lad, and no flaw in the reckoning there, either."

"Who says so?" Scott asked suspiciously, still on the lookout for some reef that should "fetch him starboard and port," as old Joe used to say.

"See for yourself, lad," replied the quartermaster. "Yonder's Adam's Peak. D'ye sight that biggest hill, dead ahead?"

"I see it," Scott answered, fixing his eyes on a cone-shaped mountain, dimly appearing far on the horizon. "Who gave it that name?"

"Nobody. It took to it, like a duck to water. Adam and Eve ruled the locker there, and did n't need a steward, till the angel anchored, with his flaming sword, and handed over their discharge papers. It gave Adam such a fright that he made one jump from yonder peak and landed in India."

"You're yarning," Scott muttered, taking but little interest in the sailor's story.

"Shiver me if I am," the quartermaster replied. "Just take a tack over there, while we spend the day changing cargo at Point de Galle and you'll see on the side o' that mountain the print o' Adam's foot, half a fathom long and every toe as perfect as you would make sailing barefoot over a clay pond."

Later, Scott learned that this was not a sailor's yarn after all, but a very correct statement of a curious legend which for no one knows how long has hung about the ragged summit of Adam's Peak. But for the moment they both forgot it all, for suddenly a shrill "Hi! yi! ya! ha!" came ringing from the open hold. The yawning pit was just behind them, leading down into the black heart of the "Tigress" and out of it came the piercing "Hi! yi! ya! ha!" again and again, startling every one about the deck till in an instant the opening was surrounded by sailors and passengers. The hatches had been

removed while the "Tigress" sailed in, the quiet sea and clear sunshine along the coast of Ceylon, to ventilate the hold and air the cargo, — the cargo of *opium!*

What! opium! and the "Tigress" an English steamer, sailing under a Christian captain, shipped by a Christian corporation, freighted by Christian merchants, who in turn were agents for Christian contractors, dealing directly with the grand Christian government of Great Britain, virtually hiring the land in India of this government and for the express



ADAM'S PEAK.

purpose of raising opium! Nor is that all, for the "Tigress" was but one of the hundreds of vessels sailing from Calcutta to Hong Kong, nine out of ten of which are loaded in precisely the same way. Do the Chinese want it? Certainly, or it would not be sent to them. So does the miserable drunkard want liquor, and purchase it, in spite of all the prohibition laws that were ever enacted. The Chinese government does not want it, however. It is a criminal offence, punishable with death, for a Chinaman, anywhere in the Empire, to be found selling opium. They sell it, it is true, and occasionally they are executed for it. But cannot China keep this brutalizing poison out of the country? She could have done so when her

ports were closed to foreign ships. But that was a species of barbarism which the civilized world could not endure. They howled about it with diplomatic throats and then they howled about it through the throats of English cannon, from British ships lying in the harbor. After the fierce struggle of 1841 the Empire was obliged to yield to the United Kingdom, and in the treaty of Nankin give free entrance to British trading ships, which simply meant vast cargoes of opium.

But will not the British government prevent it? Certainly it has been petitioned more than once by the Emperor of China to come to his aid and prevent the terrible destruction of his people. But on the other hand Great Britain derives an income of more than fifty million dollars every year, simply from her opium that is sold in China alone. That is an argument which is irresistible. And the "Tigress" was loaded with opium in her forward hold, and the hatches were thrown open to allow the clear, pure air from the cocoanut groves of Ceylon to circulate through the foul atmosphere below. And out of that pit, with its burden of death, came the shriek, "Hi! yi! ya! ha!" which meant nothing more nor less than that some Chinaman was down there frightened out of his senses.

Scott, with the missionary and the quartermaster, stood on the upper deck, and just beneath them on the main deck, looking down into the same pit, stood Hari-Paul with some of the Hindu sailors, where he had carried his search for Ling, the missing Chinese boy. Suddenly out of the darkness and rank odor of opium, following the series of shrieks, there appeared a yellow, capless head, smooth shaven, with a long, black queue standing straight out behind, and Ling himself, shivering from head to foot, came bounding up the ladder. The quartermaster saw him, and dropping over the rail met him just as he

reached the lower deck, caught him by the queue and collar and began to shake him and kick him as though he were only a mad dog, and if poor Ling was frightened before he was doubtless much more so now, and possibly wished himself back in the black hold again.



THE PALM GROVES OF CEYLON.

"Hi! yi! ya! ha!" he howled. "My welly solly, Mellican man, welly, welly solly my. Hi! yi! ya! ha!"

"Sorry, hey?" growled the quartermaster, striking the limp little figure that could only shriek incoherently and never moved to defend himself. "You've been down below to steal opium, you have, you black pigtailed thief!" And he struck him again.

"Hi! yi!" cried Ling. "My no blong tief! my go walkee

down b'low catchee blef! Smell welly good! Smell allee same Cheena."

But the quartermaster shook him again and so severely that he shook a curiously sealed package from out the depths of his loose clothes or long sleeves. It fell upon the floor at his feet; Ling made a struggle to regain it. The bronze cheeks of the sailor turned a deep crimson, and, with a start that almost gave Ling his freedom, the quartermaster caught the package and quickly crowded it into the pocket of his linen jacket. It all required but a moment from the time when Ling's first howl had called the idlers to the forward deck, but a circle had already formed about the two actors; some were Chinamen from the steerage list, some Hindus and Chinese from the crew of the steamer. Not that any of them cared much for poor Ling, for it is quite characteristic of both nations, either from a brutish idea of justice or from some other cause, to watch with satisfaction the sufferings of others caught in mischief, where they themselves would not have had the slightest objection to taking part if they had had a good opportunity.

The quartermaster cast a quick glance about him to see who had witnessed the incident and prepared to cover it by increasing the punishment he was bestowing, while Ling, as if appreciating the fact, prepared to increase his wailing. The rough hand of the sailor was raised, when a little figure succeeded in pushing its way through the last line of the surrounding circle, and springing forward, Hari-Paul threw his tiny arms over Ling's neck.

"You stop!" rang out a clear child's voice, and two indignant blue eyes from Beverly Farms looked squarely into those of the quartermaster of the "Tigress," with a defiance taught them by the eyes of the Muni Dhondaram, on the slopes of the Himalayas.

The sailor hesitated, he loosed his hold, and Ling did not require a second invitation to take himself away, but the quartermaster was ashamed of himself for letting him go, and turning, roughly upon Paul he said sharply, "You're out of place here; go back to the first cabin, where you belong."

One who is not brave is always a bully and a coward. Even a child knows it. Paul did not move, but replied, "I want that package you put in your pocket."

"Get out o' this. It's no place for a child like you," said the sailor a little more gently, and, laying his hand on the ladder that connects the two decks along the entrance to the hold, he was about to spring to the upper deck again, when Paul caught him by the coat. It would have been easy to shake off the little fingers, but Scott was coming down the ladder, and the missionary was leaning far over the guard-chains above, having seen that Paul had thrust himself in some way into the disturbance below.

"Scott! Scott!" cried Paul. "He has your package in his pocket. I saw him do it, and he won't give it to me."

"I've a bit of a thing here, whose ever it is," replied the sailor, politely and quietly enough, fumbling in his pocket. "I took it from that pigtailed thief, shook it out o' him, so to speak. Did n't know who it belonged to. But I reckoned he'd lifted it from some o' the passengers aft. If it's yours, my lad, I'm right glad I found it, for it's Beverly and Salem lyin' close abreast on the blue water, and it's glad one is to turn a good tack for a neighbor so far away from home."

Slowly enough he sought through one pocket after another, while Paul kept his blue eyes steadily on the right one. At last the hand entered it and produced the precious package. With a cry of joy Scott seized it, and, clasping the brawny hand that

surrendered it, with tears of joy in his eyes he exclaimed, "Oh, thank you, thank you! I would give you worlds if I had them. It is worth all the world to me; all but brother Paul," he added, as his eyes rested on his brother and he remembered that the papers were, after all, but a small part of the joy that he was carrying back from India to Beverly.

"He would n't give it to me," sobbed Paul, beginning to cry, half in joy, half from reaction, for the excitement of calm heroism is a strong strain upon untried nerves.

"The little skiff was a bit uproarious and made me mad. But it's all right now, my lad," he added gently, laying his hand on the curly head.

The little head shrank away from the touch, and two fierce eyes, like cat's eyes, shone from deep down in the hold, looking up from among the opium fumes upon the group. But no one noticed them.

CHAPTER III.

THE BEAUTIFUL HARBOR.

THE two boys sought their cabin. Neither spoke till they were safely closeted and the trunk pushed up against the door. Then Scott looked at Paul, and Paul looked at Scott. Without a word, they opened their arms and each gave the other a rousing hug and a resounding kiss. That was all, but it spoke a volume. Then they sat down to talk it over. Scott sat on the side sofa, but Paul, Hari-Paul, sat on the floor, cross-legged, like a complete little Hindu, yet. His short life with Dhondaram had made a deeper impression upon him than all the six years that he had lived before.

“You see I was right,” said Scott. “That rascally Chinese boy did it. If I’d been you I’d not have helped him a bit.”

“He did n’t,” replied Paul firmly. “’T was that ugly quartermaster. He did it. He knew all about it.”

“Why, Paul, you’re just a baby to say that; could n’t you see?”

“No, I could n’t see,” interrupted the boy with a decided toss of his curly head, and in a moment more the enthusiastic kiss might have been supplemented by a quarrel had not the missionary entered, inspected the recovered package, laid it upon the trunk, which was again shoved back against the door, and begun to give the boys some very good advice, and draw some very good lessons out of the accident. Scott listened attentively now, but Paul cared very little for sermons, unless

they were preached by his own muni, Dhondaram, and began inspecting the precious package. Suddenly he looked up, and exclaimed, "Scott, you was n't right, and I was n't, too!"

"Right about what, Hari-Paul?" asked the missionary with a smile, overlooking the fact that he had been interrupted in the most delicate conclusion at which he was carefully arriving.

"Why, Scott, he just said it was Ling who stole this, and I knew it was that ugly quartermaster, and I was n't right and he was n't, too."

"Who was it, then, my boy?"

"Don't know."

"Then how do you know that you were not right?" asked the minister, smiling.

"Smell of it," replied Paul, abruptly, holding the package to the minister's nose. He smelled, but simply laughed. It was some childish fancy not worth contradicting.

But Paul persisted. "Ling smells like all the rest of the Chinese on the steamer, and they all smell alike. Scott says it's musk."

"Scott is right there," replied the missionary. "Musk is used everywhere in China, and everything Chinese smells of it. But what of that?"

"Well, that ugly quartermaster smells of ugly smoke, from that dirty little pipe. But this smells of a Hindu, and see, it is bent there by a Hindu girdle. It is a Hindu who has had it."

"I declare, Paul, you are a born detective," exclaimed the missionary. "Who in the world would have thought of it. But I believe you're right. At any rate, we have the package, and if I were you, Scott, I would hide it under the carpet, there, this time, and then put the trunk on top of it. That will be safer."

This done, they all went on deck again, and the robbery was soon forgotten.

The "Tigress" was entering the beautiful harbor of Point de Galle. The sun was no brighter, the sea was no bluer, but it all seemed like a charmed fairy-land to Scott as he looked at it this time. Before them was a vast circle, a huge ring of graceful palms skirting the immense basin of water. They were just entering the only place where that circle was broken, — a narrow gateway, beyond which was the broad ocean. Far as the eye could reach there was nothing but dense green and deep blue; not a sign of city or village, wharf or pier; but the palm-trees stood with their slender trunks even submerged in the



ONE OF THE BIRDS OF CEYLON.

water, in that realm where Nature ruled so luxuriantly that she could almost defy even the ocean. Some of the palm-trees bent far out over the bay, and in their bushy crowns were tangles of brilliant cocoanuts, — king cocoanuts they call them there, growing in Ceylon as nowhere else on earth, — a deep orange tint upon one side and on the other a brilliant crimson or deep garnet, like the most beautiful New Jersey peach magnified many times.

"To-morrow morning we must go on shore," said the missionary. "We must go early and get some of those cocoanuts; they make a delightfully cool drink before breakfast."

"Drink a cocoanut!" said Scott; "I'd rather be excused. It was hard enough to drink the pills that mother used to give me. I hope I shall never be ill enough to have to drink a cocoanut before breakfast."

"That's because you never tried," replied his friend. "There are hundreds of duties in this life which seem just as disagreeable as the thought of drinking a cocoanut, but which turn out in the end to be just as delightful."

"How do you manage it?" asked Scott.

"First, we must get a native to climb one of the trees and pick us some ripe nuts, and —"

"Why not pick them up on the ground?" Scott interrupted.

"By the time they fall they are good for nothing but to ship to America," replied his friend. "The people who live among them would no more eat them when they are so hard and old as that than you would eat sweet corn in the summer after the husk has turned yellow and dry."

"Must we carry a saw from the steamer to open them, or will a big rock do?" Scott asked, still incredulous at the thought of drinking a cocoanut.

"We shall only be obliged to borrow a knife from one of the natives, for the cocoanut will be soft as a pineapple. Then when we cut off the end we shall find it full of thick, white cream, nothing more; and a more delicious drink you never tasted."

But now the "Tigress" had left the gate far behind her and was slowly steaming into the centre of the great circular lake. Beyond the palms there was a dense growth of lower trees and broad-leaved palms and bushy, flowering shrubs, but not a sign of human habitation.

"What in the world do we come in here for, any way?" Scott asked. "It's very beautiful, it's like the Arabian



IN A PALM GROVE.

Nights and Robinson Crusoe mixed together. But what's the use of a steamer stopping here?"

"It is one of the most important ports in the tropics," replied the missionary. "When we round yonder point of land you will find another deep bay setting in where now it looks like a complete circle. There may be half a dozen steamers there, coaling and transferring cargoes and passengers. Do you see that fortification there upon the right?"

"I see what might be a piece of a ruin all covered with ivy," Scott replied, looking intently.

"In reality it is a very strong fort," said his friend. "It is indeed buried in ferns and vines, however, for nature is very fastidious here, and almost instantly decorates everything that man produces outside the limits of crowded towns. See, we are rounding the point; in a few minutes you will see all the life you wish. Paul," he added, turning to Hari-Paul, whose chin was resting on his little hands crossed on the rail, "what makes you so quiet? you have not spoken a word."

"I was thinking of Ling," replied the boy.

"Ling is all right. Better than he deserves to be," Scott replied scornfully. "Come, Paul, look at this beautiful harbor. Is n't it pretty?"

"I am looking," replied Hari-Paul. "But it is not pretty when somebody is sad."

"Why, Paul, that's a philosophy that the oldest heads in the world are just trying to work out. It's not for your little brain to puzzle over. Where are you going?" the missionary asked as Hari-Paul turned away.

"Going to give Ling this banana," replied the boy.

"Let him go," said Scott a little pettishly. "He was always queer, like that, and it made him a hundred times more so

being with Dhondaram. There's no use trying to stop him."

His friend had no intention, however, of trying to stop Paul, for as he looked earnestly after the little figure with



A YOUNG FISHERMAN.

golden hair, wandering slowly down the deck, and as he noted how the Hindu sailors, as he passed them, turned from their work to make the salaam of reverence, he was thinking of the words of his Great Teacher, words that few preachers have ever

chosen for a text, words that begin with, "Except ye become as little children," and, to do him justice, after having preached to others, he was taking a most excellent lesson into his own heart.

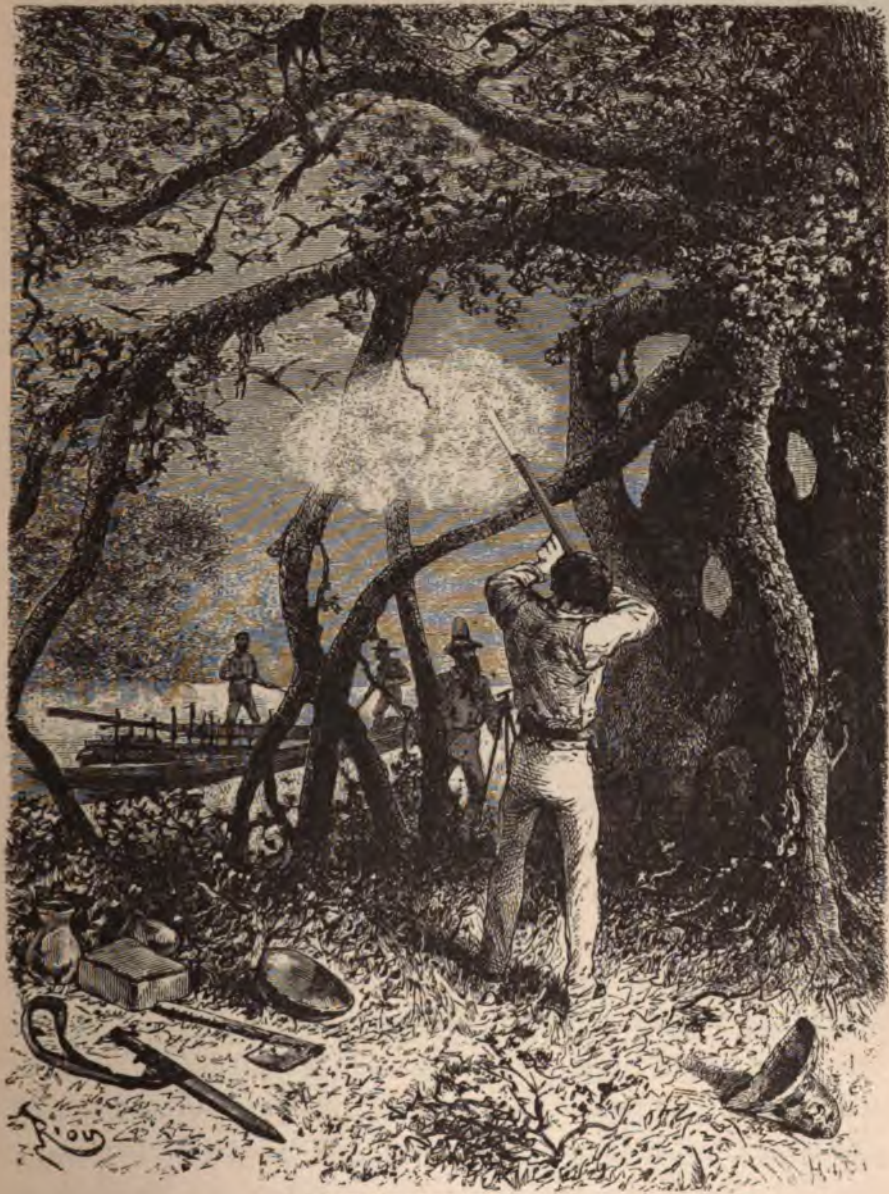
His meditations were somewhat unceremoniously broken in upon by Scott, with his one licensed explosive, "Great Cæsar's ghost!" and looking up, he discovered that the "Tigress" had rounded the cocoanut cape and headed toward busy Point de Galle. In the distance was the town, and the pier all covered with green. A flag was flying at the signal station, indicating the arrival of the "Tigress." There were other steamers lying there, and the water of the bay was literally covered with boats.

"Look at them!" Scott exclaimed. "What in the world is that long thing tied on to them all?"

It was, indeed, a curious sight; for every boat, large and small, with sail or oars, stood high up out of the water; almost like a shingle sailing on its edge, they were so narrow. From the stem and stern of each extended long, curving poles, touching the water five or ten feet from the boat, and there they were fastened by strong cords to a floating beam, sometimes it was only a rough log, and sometimes fantastically decorated and finely carved.

"It is only their fashion of ship-building," replied his friend. "They never arrived at the art of making a craft water-tight. They do not see the need of it. They take the trunk of a palm-tree, which is very light, then they build that frame so high up that the waves cannot touch them, and to keep it from capsizing then fasten another log to it by those long horns."

The "Tigress" came to anchor, but, as the sun was setting, gilding the palm groves with a golden halo, the missionary



THAT WONDERFUL FOREST.

thought it better to wait till morning before they went on shore. They would start at sunrise, for the "Tigress" sailed again at ten, and to drink the cocoanut one must gather it before the hot sun beats upon it. The little boats gathered about the steamer, but the boatmen were not so noisy as at Madras, or as they had been at Alexandria, Aden, and Bombay, when Scott was on his way to India.

"What makes them so quiet?" asked Scott.

"The Cingalese are quiet people," replied his friend. "They are not warlike, and do not learn to be so demonstrative."

"Good reason why; they've nobody to fight," said Scott.

"That is just it, my boy. They are farmers. This lovely island is so prolific that one might almost believe the legend that it was once the Garden of Eden. There is no temptation to become stalwart and muscular. The waters are full of fish and the forests are full of fruit. The climate is the most even in the world. What little they need which does not grow without gardening they can raise at any time of the year. The rainy season is the only thing which troubles them, and the spongy soil of Ceylon takes the water away almost as soon as it falls. They are the most gentle and peaceable people on the earth."

The little boats about the steamer soon gathered in all the passengers who wished to go on shore, and left the "Tigress" alone. The sunset gun sounded from a man-of-war lying in the harbor, and the signal station and all the steamers dropped their flags for the night, while almost by magic the little boats disappeared. The water was left like a mirror to reflect the golden sky, and then as suddenly the gold faded and the crimson died away, and a cold, gray light made the palm groves just distinguishable from sea and sky.

The magic of that quiet hour stole over the two as they

stood on the deck of the "Tigress," watching the changing lights on the large ships riding at anchor, reflected in long and narrow lines over the water. Then a silver gray seemed to pervade the more sombre twilight, and, turning about, they saw the round, full moon coming up out of the water, just one



WHERE THEY FOUND PAUL.

tall palm-tree, with its bushy crown, bending athwart the great disk.

"Oh, this is grand!" said Scott softly. "This island of Ceylon is beautiful."

Then they went in search of Paul, for it was long after the supper hour, and the ring of dishes sounded through the open skylight behind them, reminding them that there was reality as well as romance in life.

'Where shall we look for him?' asked the missionary.

“Why forward, somewhere, of course, among the Hindus,” Scott replied, and he was quite correct.

They found him, with the moonlight falling over his bare head, sitting on a coil of rope, with his feet wound under him like a Hindu. In front of him lay Ling, stretched upon the deck and talking earnestly, while on either side of him were two Hindus, officers of different watch gangs of the crew. As they spoke in Hindustani, Scott could not understand them, but he paused, instinctively, in the shadow of the bridge. He thought he had never seen anything so beautiful in all his life as his brother Paul, at that moment, perched on the coil of rope, the silver moonlight falling softly on the golden hair, the little hands clasping his knees, the blue eyes fixed intently on the speaker below him, the three swarthy men of the Orient lying prostrate before him, as though he were a little god and they his humble devotees.

The missionary paused, too. He thought of how long and earnestly *he* had labored to secure the confidence and love of the natives among whom he had been working, and took another lesson to his heart.

When Paul had found Ling and given him the banana and listened with Oriental patience to Ling's protestations of gratitude for having been saved from the angry quartermaster, he asked, —

“Where did you find that package, Ling?”

He did not suggest he stole it, as many a boy, large or small, might; and as Ling spoke the Hindustani much better than he did English, he replied, in that language, with a shudder, —

“Down in the black pit.”

“Why did you go there?”

"Smell opium."

"Do you eat that ugly stuff?"

"No, master."

"What made you go there, then?"

"Like home, down there. Father smokes opium. Mother



A CHEETER.

cuts up opium. Brother sells medicine for an Englishman. All smell opium."

"But how did the package come there?"

"Ghost did it!" replied Ling solemnly; and suddenly, with the old thought of the hold, his teeth began to chatter and he began to shake, and both the Hindus started forward, supporting themselves on their elbows, waiting eagerly to hear more. For they all believed in ghosts and spirits.

"He was big! Hi! yi! he was big as an elephant. He was

terrible. Ya! ha! like the god of thunder. He had great, great eyes and bushy hair and sharp teeth and — Hi! yi! ya! ha!”

Ling stopped, for the thought was too much for him, and Scott called Paul to supper.

Ling kissed Paul's foot, and the two Hindus pressed each a hand upon their foreheads as he left them. It was of no important significance, a simple act of affection, but it spoke a solemn truth, after all, and again the missionary said to himself, “Except ye become as little children.”

Paul always clambered into the upper berth, as soon as his supper was eaten, for there he was alone. No one could see him while he performed the ablutions and repeated the little prayer which Dhondaram had taught him, and which Richard Raymond had indorsed with the commendation, “That is right, Paul, say it always, always say it.” And no one knew how often the pillow was damp with tears when at last the little cheek rested unconsciously upon it, and how often the long lashes, drooping at last over the blue eyes, bore dewy memories to the muni Dhondaram. They were not unhappy thoughts, however, for Paul was an exceptionally happy child, and the hour of all the day, the return of which he longed for most earnestly, was that one which lulled him toward dreamland, while he smiled, through his tears, as, half unconsciously, his head seemed resting again on the knotted arm of the Hindu outlaw, instead of upon a pillow marked with the British arms and the name “Tigress.”

That night, when, an hour or more later, Scott said “good night” to the missionary, he almost stumbled over the prostrate form of Ling lying sound asleep before the state-room door.

“Go to bed, boy,” Scott muttered angrily, for he thought Ling must be only waiting a chance to steal something.

“Scusee, scusee, Mellican man. My likee here. My sleepee fus-late.”

“Don’t care if you do sleep first-rate there,” replied Scott. “I tell you to go to bed. What do you want to be hanging round here for?”

“Dis young man, blue eye, he blong welly, welly good poor Ling. Mabe he wakee up, nightee time, winchee water, my catchee he dlink.”

“Well, you get out and go to bed. If Paul wants a drink in the night I’ll give it to him,” said Scott, as he entered the state-room. Then he heard Ling mutter, “Welly, welly solly, my makee mad, Mellican man. My go.” And he was almost sorry he had spoken so sharply. But upon general principles it is safer to keep a Chinese servant at arm’s length, and it would be better for Ling to be where he belonged.

Had he followed Ling, however, he would have found that he went no farther than the saloon, and an hour later he was in his old position before the state-room door.

CHAPTER IV.

BEYOND THE BENGAL BAY.

WITH a strange feeling of dread, Paul woke in the night. His blue eyes opened wide. He was not asleep and dreaming. He was sure of it. But there, in the door of the state-room, stood a form. It was the embodiment of a horrible cloud which for a month had shrouded Paul's life in India. It was the personification of the only thing in his short life which represented anything but happiness. It filled his ideal of misery and despair. The cold perspiration starting to his forehead, he lay there trembling, unable to utter a sound. The figure moved. It was a man, yet more like something from that vast throng of evil spirits, supposed to swarm in the sunny lands of the equator. There were two fierce, bright eyes, two rows of sharp, shining teeth, and a mat of bushy hair about them.

A faint but rank odor of opium filled the state-room. Possibly it was that which had wakened Paul, possibly it was that which now roused Ling, sleeping soundly on the sill, for with a shriek he started to his feet, and a "Hi! yi! ya! ha!" rang through the saloon of the "Tigress," rousing the passengers from their dreams. Scott woke and sprang out of his berth, but all was still again. Nothing was to be seen. There was no spirit in the room, no man or form of any kind. Everything everywhere was still, but the solemn wash of the low waves against the sides of the "Tigress." It is painfully quiet on a steamer during a night at anchor, when the engines

are still ; and the accustomed thud and tremble and the steady motion over the waves one misses more than seems possible.

Scott laughed at himself. He thought it must have been a dream, and was about to creep into his berth again, when, through force of habit, he looked to see if Paul were sleeping well. The moonlight shone through the square window, much larger than the little round ports in Atlantic steamers, and the room was not dark. Paul's eyes were open, but he did not speak.

" Paul, are you awake ? " Scott whispered.

The child nodded his head.

" Are you ill, Paul ? "

He shook his head.

" Did you hear a noise just now ? "

Again Paul nodded his head, but did not speak.

" Why don't you speak, Paul ? " Scott asked, laying his hand gently on his brother's forehead. Paul's forehead was cold, but the night was warm. Scott became alarmed. " You are frightened, Paul," he said, climbing into the berth beside him. " It was only Ling. The pigtailed rascal was bound to sleep at the door last night. I drove him off once, but he must have come back again. Guess he'd been eating opium and had a bad dream. I declare I smell the opium now. Paul, you're not ill, are you ? " he asked again, as the little arms wound nervously about his neck.

Paul only shook his head and whispered very faintly, " Scott, Scott, please stay here with me."

Eight bells struck on the deck. It was midnight. Scott readily promised that he would stay.

The missionary's good wife came in as usual in the morning to help Paul in dressing, but she soon discovered that he was

quite too weak to attempt it, and all day he lay upon a bed made up on the sofa.

The drinking of the cocoanut was abandoned, for when Paul was ill Scott had no heart for anything. Ling was faithful as a



CONFUCIUS

hound could have been to his master. He acknowledged that he had cried out in the night, but simply said that he had seen a ghost, and every one laughed at him. The missionary attempted to question Paul, but found it useless. "Nervous prostration," the ship's doctor said. "He must lie still for a few days and he will be all right." And Paul was very willing to lie still.

The "Tigress" sailed out of the harbor again and out of the gate, and began her passage over the Bengal Bay.

"Paul must have been dreadfully frightened," Scott said to the missionary, as they stood upon the deck watching the palmy coast of Ceylon disappear.

"I think it was something more than fright," replied his friend. "Paul is not a boy to be easily frightened; he is too quiet and long-headed. I cannot understand it. There is something wrong somewhere; Ling seems to feel it by instinct, just like a dog. Possibly some of the Hindus have got up some superstition or other and have been annoying him."

They went down to the state-room, where Paul lay on the sofa, and while Scott fanned him the missionary told them stories of Ceylon.

"Are there any wild animals there?" asked Scott.

"There are birds without number," replied their friend;

“beautiful birds; all kinds of parrots and monkeys; but except the elephants there are no large animals that are fierce,— there are cheeters, though, all over the island.



A STUDENT.

“That’s a funny name, what do they cheat?” asked Paul.

“They cheat strangers into thinking that they are Bengal tigers,” replied the missionary, smiling. “They resemble them somewhat, and indeed it is commonly supposed that they were originally the same thing. Years ago, it is very probable that

Ceylon was not an island, but a part of India. The narrow strait that divides them is still very shallow, and may easily have been washed out there by a series of severe storms. They say that some tigers were then left on this island and could not get back again; either there was no game here for them, such as the tiger feasts upon, or they cleared the larder in a short time, for certainly there is none now, and thus the fierce and ugly tigers were forced to eat roots and grass and fruit, and, as a result, they grew weaker and weaker, and their fur grew shorter and shorter, and their fierceness disappeared, and their bodies did not reach the old size."

"In fact, they became tamed by nature,—just like the people of Ceylon, as you told me last night," said Scott.

"That is it, precisely," the missionary replied.

"Now," said Scott, "tell us something about the Chinese. We shall enjoy seeing China more if we know something about it in advance."

"Paul's eyes grew bright again with this, and he turned upon the sofa so that he could listen more comfortably.

"There is a Chinese proverb," he began, "which says, 'He is trying to scatter fog with a fan.' I am sure that a wise Chinaman would say that of me if he knew I was trying to tell you about China."

"Are there any wise Chinamen?" asked Scott, doubtfully.

"I can assure you of that," replied his friend. "China in a sense is all wisdom and nothing else. Knowledge is made the basis of everything: the only difficulty is that the knowledge itself is not good for much. It simply amounts to knowing what the sages said ages and ages ago; and even what they said, as Confucius, for instance, was declared by themselves to be only a compilation of what other wise men had said long,

long before. They go back, back, back, and care very little for anything ahead. They hate progressive, modern notions,—railways and telegraphy are abominations in their eyes. They love their relatives while they live, they worship them when



A GEOGRAPHICAL IDEA.

they are dead. The wisest men in China are the men who can go furthest back in the Chinese classics, which are only books of proverbs, after all, written by Confucius or long before him."

"It's just the other way in America," said Scott.

"Just exactly, and perhaps too much so. We think a little

too lightly of the past. We love our relatives while they live and forget all about them where they are dead, and the wisest man is the man who goes way ahead of us all into the future."

"Do they really know anything about the old sages, or just pretend to?" asked Scott.

"If you should attend one of their examinations, you'd soon discover that they must not only know something, but *really* know it, before they amount to anything. They cannot hold offices of any kind, they cannot take any rank in China, except in the army, without passing literary examinations.

"Cæsar! It's just one big college!" Scott exclaimed, and in a sense he was quite correct.

"There are examination halls in all the large cities," his friend continued, "which will accommodate ten thousand competitors, and after they have passed the lower grades and apply for the higher, they find each more strict, and for the upper grades they are furnished with little cells, where they have to stay two days without seeing any one. There they have to write three prose essays and one poem."

"Poetry "

"Yes, and when the two days are up they must go, whether the work is done or not. They write their names in one corner of each production, and folding the paper over, they seal it over the name. This seal cannot be broken till the judgment is passed. Examiners read the work. If it is very bad they say so at once; but if good, each piece is copied in red ink, so that no one can recognize the handwriting. Then it goes before other examiners, and the best ones receive a round red mark. These go to the head examiner, and out of them he picks only the best."

"Precious few lucky fellows, when that end man gets

through sifting, I guess," said Scott, with a sigh of pity as he thought of his own school days. "But where do they all study, and how do they learn?"

"Why, those who have studied before and have nothing else to do earn a living by teaching. When the children begin, it is by copying letters, or words, for you know there are really no letters, but every character is a word. They lay a thin sheet of paper over a written page and copy in that way, without knowing anything about what it means. They even learn to read and repeat page after page of the classics without understanding a word of it."

"How can that be?" Scott asked, incredulously.

"The written and spoken languages are so very different."

"Why, I thought that everything Chinese was precisely the same everywhere, just slant-eyed, copper-colored, shaven-headed, pigtailed Celestial, from Malacca to Siberia, and in San Francisco and the wash-houses in Boston," said Scott.

"I made the same mistake," replied his friend, "but the first time I came to India I stopped for two months with the missionaries of China, to find that I was vastly mistaken. There are a great many ways of *speaking* Chinese even, and south of the Blue River, the Yangtse-Kiang, you could hardly travel for a day without seeing people in the evening who could not understand those you left in the morning. North of it it is different, and everywhere there is what is called the mandarin or court language, which the scholars can understand, which is something the same. I have seen a mandarin ruling as prefect over a city where he was obliged to have an interpreter to tell him what the people said."

"At any rate he could n't hear the people growl, if they did n't like him," said Scott.

"That may be, Scott, but they have ways of showing it, if they do not like their prefects, that no one can misunderstand. We call China an unlimited despotism, but you will find that, after all, if it is not a government for the people and of the



A MANDARIN.

people, it is most emphatically a government by the people. They sometimes refuse to receive a prefect of whom they have bad reports, and actually send him away from the city gates, in disgrace and in spite of the command of the Emperor. And in every grand and formal procession, where the high mandarin rides in state, a part of the procession is made of chain bearers, to signify that with the chains the people will bind him if he does not do his duty."

"Good enough!" said Scott, emphatically. "That would n't be so bad in some of our inaugural processions in America. How would it go to have a coach and four carry a pair of handcuffs behind the governor's carriage?"

"Are they cruel?" asked Paul.

"That is just the worst part of it all, Paul," replied the missionary. "The law is cruel, very cruel, and they give a criminal very little opportunity to defend himself. When one is caught in a crime, in China, whether rich or poor, every one

seems to delight in seeing him tortured. You will see enough of the cruel side when we reach there. Let us talk of something pleasanter."

"What ugly names they have," said Scott.

"Ling is a pretty name," Paul interrupted, earnestly.

"There are many poetically beautiful names in the Chinese, Paul, and they all mean something. They are not like our names, with no significance whatever."

"I wonder what 'Ling' means," said Paul.

"That I do not know," replied his friend, "but if you ask him, some day, doubtless he can tell you."

"What does China mean?" asked Scott.

"That is not a Chinese word at all," replied the missionary. It comes from the term *Sinae*, applied to the old *Tsin* dynasty, and we have twisted it into China."

"What's the first that's known of China?" Scott asked again.

"Way back in the days when Isaiah, the Jewish prophet, was writing, it is supposed that he knew of the country, for you know he said, 'Behold, these shall come from far: and lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of *Sinim*.'"

"And that meant China?"

"I suppose it did."

Scott drew a long breath, and then asked, "What have the people amounted to in all this time? Have they done anything that was worth doing, besides learning to wash and iron first-rate?"

"Here and there a little," replied the missionary, smiling. "They invented and discovered the compass, the most important thing upon the sea. They invented china, the most important furnishing of the house."

"And is that where the name comes from?" Scott interrupted. "I never thought of that, as many times as I've heard the name."

"Then they invented gunpowder, the most important article in modern war, and they did the first printing, the most important thing in all modern civilization."



BY THE WAYSIDE.

"Well, they did n't spend all their time in reading musty proverbs, that's sure. But I thought it was a fellow in Germany, or somewhere, who invented printing."

"Tell us some stories about the people," Scott added, after a pause. "How they eat the cats, and then have to eat the rats and mice because there are no cats to do it for them. There's a

fine picture of that operation in our geographies at school."

"I remember that picture, but I never thought I should go where they did it," Paul added, from down in the depths of the sofa pillow.

"Nor will you, Paul," replied their friend. "You will have to hunt a long while in China before you find anything at all like that picture, though it is true that cats are at times eaten there, and so are rats, by the miserably poor, perhaps.

Why, even in Paris, in 1870, during the Prussian siege, skinned cats sold for \$1.30 apiece, and many a rich family was anxious to purchase them. But they have a theory that the flesh of any animal has a tendency to make one like that animal. The dog is strong and of very great endurance, so they often prescribe a little dog meat, mixed with the food, for one who is feeble. I once met a man going down the street, in China, with the bones of a tiger, which he was breaking up and selling, in small quantities, to people who pounded the pieces into powder and mixed it with their food to make them strong.” •

“Here’s a bit of poetry,” said Scott, “which I found slipped into a book in the ship’s library, the other day:—

‘Mandarin with yellow button
 Handing round conserves of snails,
 Smart young men about Canton
 In Nankin tights and peacock tails,
 Eating rare and dreadfulainties,—
 Kitten cutlets, puppy pies,
 Bird’s-nest soup, which (so convenient)
 Every bush about supplies.’

What does it mean?”

“Nothing at all, Scott. Less than nothing. It is made up by some one who could not even do so well as the candidates for rank. The yellow button refers to the custom of indicating their rank by buttons, caps, and girdles. It is a very good thing, too, for one always knows to what sort of a man he is speaking.”

“I like that,” said Scott. “Papa told us once of a man who met the President in the hall of the White House, and, mistaking him for a porter, told him to take charge of his valise and umbrella while he went up to see Mr. Lincoln.”

“One could not make that mistake in China.”

"But what about the peacock tails. Do they go strutting about with those, too?"

"That is another sign of rank. There are only six men in China who are allowed to wear peacock feathers, with two eyes, upon their hats, and of course they are wondrous proud of them. When photography was introduced in China, one of these high officials sat for his picture. He was delighted with the likeness, but so angry that the photograph did not show both the front of his face and the peacock feather behind his back, that he denounced the whole thing as a delusion and a fraud."

"Good enough," said Scott, who had not yet forgotten the emphatic slang, so terse and expressive, in the Beverly boys' dialect. "But how about the snail preserves?"

"There is more truth than poetry in that," replied his friend. "I never attended a great native dinner, but have been told that they are very curious affairs. You may receive an invitation when we visit Canton."

Scott shrugged his shoulders. He had little idea at that moment, comfortably seated in the cabin of the stanch "Tigress," how much of China he was to see before, and under what circumstances he was to reach Canton, if indeed he should reach it at all. But his friend continued:—

"The Chinese really eat very little, but their ideas of hospitality are the height of politeness and an innumerable array of miniature courses. Sometimes a single dinner will have fifty or sixty different dishes, not so much to eat as to look at. There will be dried fruits, oysters, and caviare, poached pigeons' eggs, stewed sturgeon gills, tadpoles, pickled crabs' eggs, sparrows' gizzards, sheep's eyes, soft, green bamboo shoots in salads, and watermelon seeds, with a host of other things."



WHERE THEY CAME TO ANCHOR.

"I'd rather be excused," said Scott. "I became accustomed to curree and cardamom seeds in India, but I think such a dinner would not prevent my starving to death."

"You may yet grow fat upon just such diet," replied the missionary, laughing, "and there is an old saying that 'many a true word is spoke in jest.'"

Thus the days passed as the "Tigress" sailed over the Bengal Bay, and Paul was on the deck again as she entered the Penang harbor. The delay there was very brief, and by the time the steamer came to the wharf at Singapore, Paul was quite well enough to go on shore.

Very early in the morning they started in an English carriage, with two little Singapore horses, so small that Scott said he felt more like inviting them into the carriage than asking them to draw him, driven by a man who looked like a Hindu, with the exception of his very bushy head. Paul insisted that Ling should accompany them, and Hari-Paul, with all his quiet, gentle nature, had a way of making up his mind, of knowing what he wanted and why he wanted it, and of resting assured that his little will was quite sufficient to accomplish it. The result was evident, and in his quiet way Paul carried many a day that other boys might have lost just by being too fierce about it.

Ling went with them. Scott went to the steward and asked permission to take him. The steward said, "No."

Paul went directly to the captain. The captain stroked his golden hair, and laughing, said, "Yes," and Ling went.

CHAPTER V.

THEY SAW HIM IN SINGAPORE.

THE road was a long one, but its windings were beautiful. The carriage left the wharf and shore behind, and for a mile rumbled through the city. On every side were shops and booths. They were small shops, at the best not over ten feet square, and the rents were low, while the great majority of merchants had no shops at all, and their rents were in proportion. The carriage passed the bank, a fine English structure, but within the officials were all Chinese. Then a Hindu temple faced the street, but not so beautiful as the boys had seen in India, for only the poorer classes were Hindus, while the merchants, overseers, bankers, brokers, and ruling men wore the queue. Here and there was an Englishman, panting, and drying his face with a large handkerchief, or lounging in a palanquin, while the bearers did the panting and perspiring. A magnificent English coach approached them, with outriders and footmen, and an English coat-of-arms in gold decorating the coach and the harness trappings of the four spirited horses. It was Mr. Dunlop, the British resident. He had met the missionary, and, recognizing him, stopped the coach, and, with a hearty good morning, declared that he was then on his way to the steamer to ask him to spend the day with him. The coach was amply large, and with the missionary and his wife on one seat and Mr. Dunlop with Scott and Paul on the other, while Ling sat between the two footmen who were standing behind, the coach

rolled away again at a rapid rate, and the two little, jaded horses and the public carriage and bushy-headed driver were dismissed. How fortunate this little incident was none of the party knew, yet it was *very* fortunate, as they discovered long afterward.

Mr. Dunlop was an old gentleman, with iron-gray hair and an iron-gray mustache. Rather savage to look at, perhaps, but he lifted Paul's pith helmet with a gentle hand, and smiling in the bright blue eyes that met his, he said, "My little man, I had a telegram, the other day, from my old friend Raymond in Bombay, telling me you were coming."

"From Mr. Raymond! Good!" exclaimed Scott. "Is n't he a *splendid* man?"

"He is, indeed," replied Mr. Dunlop.

"Did he say anything about Dhondaram?" Paul asked, timidly, and his lips trembled.

"Dhondaram! Dhondaram! why bless me, yes. That was it. I could not make it out. He said, 'Tell Paul that Dhondaram is pardoned.'"

With a cry of joy Paul threw his arms about Mr. Dunlop's neck, and, though he knocked off both the pith helmets in the act, he pressed a resounding kiss on the iron-gray mustache. It must have pricked him savagely, for all by himself, under his helmet, he was twisting his rosy lips into all manner of odd shapes for five minutes afterward. Yes, Dhondaram was pardoned and free. That was all he cared to know to make him the happiest boy on earth, and more than once, before they reached Mr. Dunlop's mansion, he burst into a merry laugh all by himself, while the others were talking of Singapore.

"Is this a part of China?" Scott asked, as, passing the thickly settled city, they were whirling rapidly down a long road shaded with palm-trees.

"Not exactly," replied Mr. Dunlop. "It is only a little island, at the best. But a very pretty and a very healthy place."

"There seem to be a great many Chinese about the streets."

"That indeed is true, and as for the ground facts of the case, I suppose that Singapore could dispense with every



THROUGH THE MAIN STREET.

Englishman here and not know it, and, so far as business goes, with every Hindu. The heavy thinking and heavy trading are all done by the Chinese. But there are Japanese and Siamese and Hindus, no end of them, here, doing the hard work. There go a couple of Japs now, with a cartload of merchandise. See them. They go faster and cost less than horses, because they eat less and last longer."

"Are the Chinese really good business men?" Scott asked, for he had only heard of one side so far, and thought of them

as dusty book-worms, who only knew how to read and write poetry.

“In England or America they would not be called good business men,” said Mr. Dunlop, “for they are too slow and too conversative; they would never frighten the world with large transactions and new ideas. But their stronghold is in always making a penny on everything, and never spending money. Here in Singapore, and, in fact, everywhere in the East, they are the great business power. Mathematics is a mania with them.”

“Is that so?” said Scott, looking up in surprise, forgetting that an expression, so common in America, was after all one of very doubtful politeness. But Mr. Dunlop looked for nothing of the sort and replied:—

“It is so emphatically true that the very first thing the Chinese baby learns is to figure. The very first thing he does is to trade, and he keeps it up his life long. He is making his estimates on something all day long,—estimating his chances to make a penny.”

“He must be a miserable miser before he gets through,” said Scott, shrugging his shoulders, and thinking of a Jew pedler who made the rounds of Beverly Farms every month and was always figuring.

“The Chinese are peculiar,” replied his friend. “Instead of being misers, they are among the most generous people in the world. In politeness they are as far ahead of the French as the French are ahead of the English. Now and then you will meet a Chinaman who has absolutely nothing to be generous with, or who is an exception and selfish, who will make politeness answer the whole, and think that because he is kind enough to ask a friend to dinner his friend should also be

kind enough to decline. But the empire speaks for itself. Almost all the great works of China are private enterprises. The best roads are built with private capital; private donations have constructed almost all the bridges of China; the finest pagodas are the work of individuals, and there are more benevolent institutions in China, like homes for orphans, aged women, old men, free hospitals, and such things, than in any



THE COUNTRY SEAT.

other country on earth; or, if you come down to small things, you often pass the home of a wealthy Chinese on a country highway, with a large pot of tea at the gate for thirsty travellers."

"They are indeed a curious combination," remarked the missionary. "It will take a long time for them to understand us."

"Or for us to understand them," added Mr. Dunlop.

"Did you say it was a *telegram* you received from Mr. Raymond?" Scott asked.

"Yes; that is one of our modern innovations that these fel-

lows find it hard to understand; but it's a blessing that one can only appreciate who is shut as far out of the world as we are. When I first came to Singapore it took four months to ask a question and have it answered from England; now, my wife is visiting friends in Scotland, and every morning at lunch I receive a message from her, sent less than two hours before. I remember the last time Raymond was at my home. He read in the *Gazette* the account of the large fire in Boston, — where you came from, my boy," he said, touching Paul on the shoulder; "and while he read it the engines were still at work upon the flames."

"He told me about that in India," said Scott, "but then I never thought I should ever be here, too."

"Well, here you are," replied Mr. Dunlop, as the coach whirled into a magnificent old gateway, with heavy stone pillars all covered with trailing vines, brilliant with enormous flowers, and then, after climbing a hill, stopped before a deep veranda that surrounded a low but large and handsome mansion.

"Now," said their host, "breakfast will not be ready for an hour, but if you will come with me to my pineapple orchard we'll take a tonic first."

Pineapples! That started Paul to his feet at once, and with Ling trotting on behind him, he started on the run, and far before the rest, for the place which Mr. Dunlop had indicated as the orchard.

A broad, green hillside was first to be crossed, and as Paul ran on he noticed that it was not grass beneath his feet, but a soft carpet of delicate green leaves looking like fern leaves. He turned to look back toward the rest of the party, and paused abruptly. There was a well-defined path through the

green leaves where he had come over them, but there was no path before him. He struck the leaves in a fresh spot with his foot and they all wilted instantly and lay upon the ground.

"Have you lost your way, Paul?" Scott called, as they approached.



THE HUNTING GROUNDS.

"This is funny," replied the boy. "Look, it kills these leaves to touch them."

"They are the sensitive plant," said Mr. Dunlop. "It grows wild here, and is a great pest, for it kills everything else, notwithstanding it is so sensitive," he added, laughing. "But don't fear, my man, it is only 'playing possum,' as Mr. Raymond used to say. Whatever that means I don't precisely know, but it will all pick up again the moment your back is turned. See, some of it is coming to life again already."

The pineapple orchard was a rare treat; growing like little bristling palm-trees, two feet high at most, or lying flat upon the ground like huge strawberries, they found the fruit not yet heated by the morning sun, and literally, as Scott remarked, "As cool as cucumbers."

"Is drinking a cocoanut any better than this?" Scott asked the missionary as they sat in the shadow of large umbrellas, held by native servants, eating the pineapples as Englishmen eat their eggs, out of the shell, only cutting off the top, to find a soft pulp within, quite as different from the fruit imported to America as are the oranges and cocoanuts.

It was with regret, as the day wore on, that they found themselves seated in the coach again, and flying like the wind toward the steamer, behind the four spirited horses.

When driving through a delightfully shady grove, Ling leaned far over from behind, exclaiming, in a low voice, "Hi! yi! Datee he!"

"There he is," said Paul, faintly, with a shudder, almost in the same breath.

All looked eagerly in the direction indicated. There were only a few natives sitting on the ground, half hidden by the undergrowth. "Who?" said the missionary, sternly, turning toward Ling.

"My no sabbee, tinkce ghost!" replied Ling, his teeth chattering.

"Who was it, Paul?" Scott asked more gently, as he felt his brother's hand trembling on his arm.

"I don't know," Paul replied. And indeed he did not know. It was something that filled him with terror. That was all he realized.

Scott laughed. "If I did not know, I would not be so



A DISMAL CROWD UPON THE WHARF.

scared, Paul. The Hindus filled your head with funny notions. There's no such thing as ghosts and spirits. Papa will laugh it out of you when we reach home."

"It was n't a ghost," Paul whispered.

"Well, I would n't mind, Paul, whatever it was," he added, encouragingly; and Paul, manfully taking his hand from his brother's arm, smiled, though his voice trembled as he replied, —

"I don't mind, Scott; Dhondaram is pardoned, and that's all I care about India."

As the sun was setting, the "Tigress" sailed from Singapore with the royal mail. The prow swung proudly toward the north, and she headed for the China Sea and Hong Kong.

When all was safe and the course laid out, the captain left the bridge, and meeting Paul upon the deck, he lifted his dimpled chin, that he might look well into the boy's eyes, — every one seemed to long to look into those eyes, — and said, "The next time we stop, my lad, you'll leave us. I shall be sorry, shall you?"

"I'm going home," Paul replied, with all a boy's frankness and politeness.

"That's it, my lad, that's it. Home's the word, and there'll be one father's heart right glad when you signal that harbor. Safe may the ship sail that carries you."

"The barometer's dropping fast, sir," said the second officer.

"Let her drop," replied the captain; "the 'Tigress' is good for 't. Call up the whole crew. Drop every mast to the deck; make everything fast before a man turns in. We'll have a bit of a brush now that'll make you sea-sick if you're not a good sailor, lad," he added, with a smile, as he left Paul and entered his cabin.



THE STORM RISING.

CHAPTER VI.

IN THE CHINA SEA.

THAT night Paul's bed was again made on the low sofa, for the sea ran so high that it tossed the "Tigress" like a cork. He could scarcely remain in his place, even on the sofa, with a high side-board to protect him. The wind shrieked through the rigging, but the boys were not wise enough to be frightened, and rather enjoyed it. There were very few passengers at the breakfast-table the next morning. Paul asked in astonishment what had become of them all, for he had no idea of what a popular thing it is to be sea-sick when the waves run high, and never had a better appetite, while he laughed and clung to the table with one hand and held on to his plate with the other, and wondered how in the world he was going to eat what was on it. It made him a hero at once among the officers, and they vied with each other to help him master the critical position. There was never a merrier company in the saloon of the "Tigress" than the circle about Hari Paul, a steward behind his chair, a steward beside him, holding him when the ship lurched; an officer on each side trying to feed him, and another opposite, laughing at the mistakes they made in steering for his open mouth. They were merry, for they knew well that there was really no danger. The monsoon had changed and something like a typhoon was blowing from the north. That was all. It was serious enough, of course, but the "Tigress" from stem to stern was one of the

stanchest steamers afloat. She had weathered many a fierce gale and was perfectly capable of weathering this. They had open sea before them and the harbor not two days away. If



A CHINAMAN AT HOME.

the very worst should come they need only "lay to" before the gale. They would bend to the wind, but not break. That was impossible.

Scott was not quite so well satisfied. He left the table before the steward returned with his order. Fresh air was needed to give him an appetite, and he climbed the stairs leading to the little saloon around the companion-way, laboriously clinging to the rail with both hands when the stern sank low in the waves, then tumbling onward two or three steps at a time when it suddenly rose again. The door on the weather side was bolted. He went to the other. A sharp gust of wind blew a cloud of salt spray in his face as he opened it. A broad plank, fastened in slots made for the purpose, rose almost as high as his knees when the door was opened, for the waves were rolling over the deck. Scott looked up and down the deserted steamer, and a feeling of dread crept over him. Not a soul was to be seen but a Hindu sailor with an oil-cloth coat on, clinging to the rail and tugging with might and main to fasten a life-rope. The sailor looked at him as he opened the door, shook his head dubiously, and turned to his work again.

Leaning still farther forward, Scott could see an officer and two of the quartermasters clinging to the bridge rail. But what a strange transformation in the steamer! The masts that rose so high and gracefully as they sailed the Bengal Bay were short and ugly stumps, like the trunk of a tree he once saw in Beverly, after it had been struck by lightning. At first he thought they must have been broken off; but in reality the "Tigress," like many other steamers sailing these waters, was built for just such weather as this, with masts partially of iron, made to lower, like a Japanese fishing-pole, when the wind was strong. All the boats that before hung over the water were now hanging just above the steamer's deck, bound there by strong ropes. All this Scott saw in an instant, and, strangling almost from the spray that covered him, he closed the door

again and went to his state-room, where Paul and the missionary joined him a little later.

"I can stand the Bay of Biscay," he said, with a faint smile, "but this beats me all to pieces."

Their friend was not much better off, but, bracing himself in a comfortable position, he proposed telling the boys some more tales of his short experience in China, to while the time away, and found willing listeners.

"I can hardly tell you anything," he began, "(the Chinese are very peculiar), without giving you wrong impressions. When we are looking at one side we are quite forgetting the other. They must be missionary stories that I tell, and missionary stories are all a little one-sided, you know; only look out for the other side when you reach China and it will be all right. It is very trite to say that the heathen Chinese is peculiar, but, after all, Bret Harte fastened upon the only word in the language that would express what they are. They are not absurd, for they are too much in earnest. They are not mad, for there is a vast method running through everything. They are not wild, for they reason profoundly. But from the top of their shorn heads to the bottoms of their thick, wooden-soled shoes, they *are* peculiar. Their notion of evil spirits is something prodigious. It would take a lifetime to explain it all, and, indeed, I doubt if there is any born Chinaman who could explain it all. The location of the house is very important, and the position of the doors, and then the rooms, and most of all the beds. They have luck doctors, whose entire duty is to attend to these things. Every misfortune that befalls them is the work of some evil spirit. These spirits only fly in a straight line and make very hard work of turning corners, so you'll find more corners to turn in getting into a Chinese

house than in going through the Garden of the Gods in Wyoming."

"Boston would be a bad place for evil spirits to get round," Scott interrupted, with another groan.

"The great spirit that is everywhere and must be respected upon all occasions is Loong, the dragon."

"Ugh! I shall respect him, too, if I ever run across him," moaned Scott.

"Then the great principle that controls everything is the Foong-shooy, and the two powers are Yin and Yang, or life and death, heat and cold, day and night, wind and water, north and south, good and evil.



THE GOD OF THUNDER.

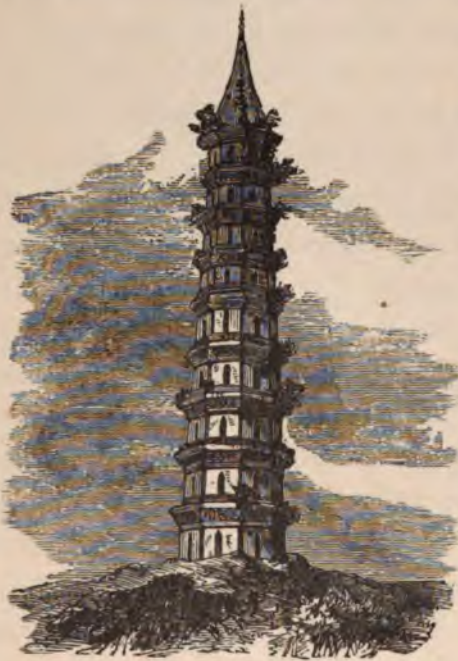
It is supposed that the philosophers who first wrote of the Foong-shooy only meant that people must have proper regard for the courses of the wind and the currents of water in selecting positions for homes, roads, bridges, groves, and everything else, but it has grown into such an enormous superstition to-day that no matter what goes wrong it is the Foong-shooy that is out of order. The sublime equilibrium between Yin and Yang, the good and evil, is lost. If any one fall sick it is Foong-shooy that is wrong. If he have a fever the heat has the best of the cold principle, and logically the doctor gives him all kinds of drugs, mixed together, that possess cooling properties. They have a strong faith in anything which is high as being above the reach of evil."

"Well, why in the world were the houses all so low, then, in Singapore. An evil spirit could have jumped on to the roof of any of them without so much as a sheet of paper to stand on,"

muttered Scott, who was just ill enough to rather relish the idea that he had caught his friend in a mistake.

“That is the very reason they were low,” replied the missionary, “as the highest building in the neighborhood would be the most beyond the influence of evil, everybody would build right up into the air, and the one great struggle would be for each man to make his home a little Tower of Babel, and the richer he was the higher he would go, while the great mass of poor would have to lodge the whole army of evil spirits. So they came to the understanding that no one should be allowed to build high at all, and all the houses must fare alike in this respect, only the temples and pagodas and towers to the dragon and such things are raised high in the air. In Ningpo, a few years ago, the Roman Catholics began building a fine cathedral at one end of a street, called the street of the Centipede, because it had so many little streets leading off from it. At the other end of the street was the great dragon tower. The people made a terrible ado when the walls of the cathedral rose higher and higher. But when the spire went beyond the height of the dragon tower there was almost an insurrection. All the wealthy families left the street of the Centipede, and some even left the city. On the summit of one of the spires was put a flashing gilt cock, for a weather-vane. Chinese cities are almost all built of wood, and the Chinese are more careless about fire than any other people in the world. They smoke, incessantly, with little pipes with tiny brass bowls and huge stems. They roll up a little ball of tobacco, put it in the bowl, puff a few times, then knock the live fire out upon the floor, wherever they happen to be,—the poorer classes, I mean, of course,—and the result is that fires and very destructive ones are constantly occurring. It was not at all strange that the

street of the Centipede should burn up, but when it did, very soon after the cathedral was completed, every one laid it to that. They said it was so high that the evil spirits could not get over it, and that they all stopped in that one street and made a terrible disturbance. At first no one would build there



A PAGODA.

again, but very soon some luck doctor said it was the gilt cock on the spire that did it, for, as every one knows, a cock will eat up a centipede. Then they rebuilt the street, but called it the street of the Wildcat, for every one knows that a wildcat will eat up a cock, and on the dragon tower they placed a gaudy image that was supposed to represent a wildcat."

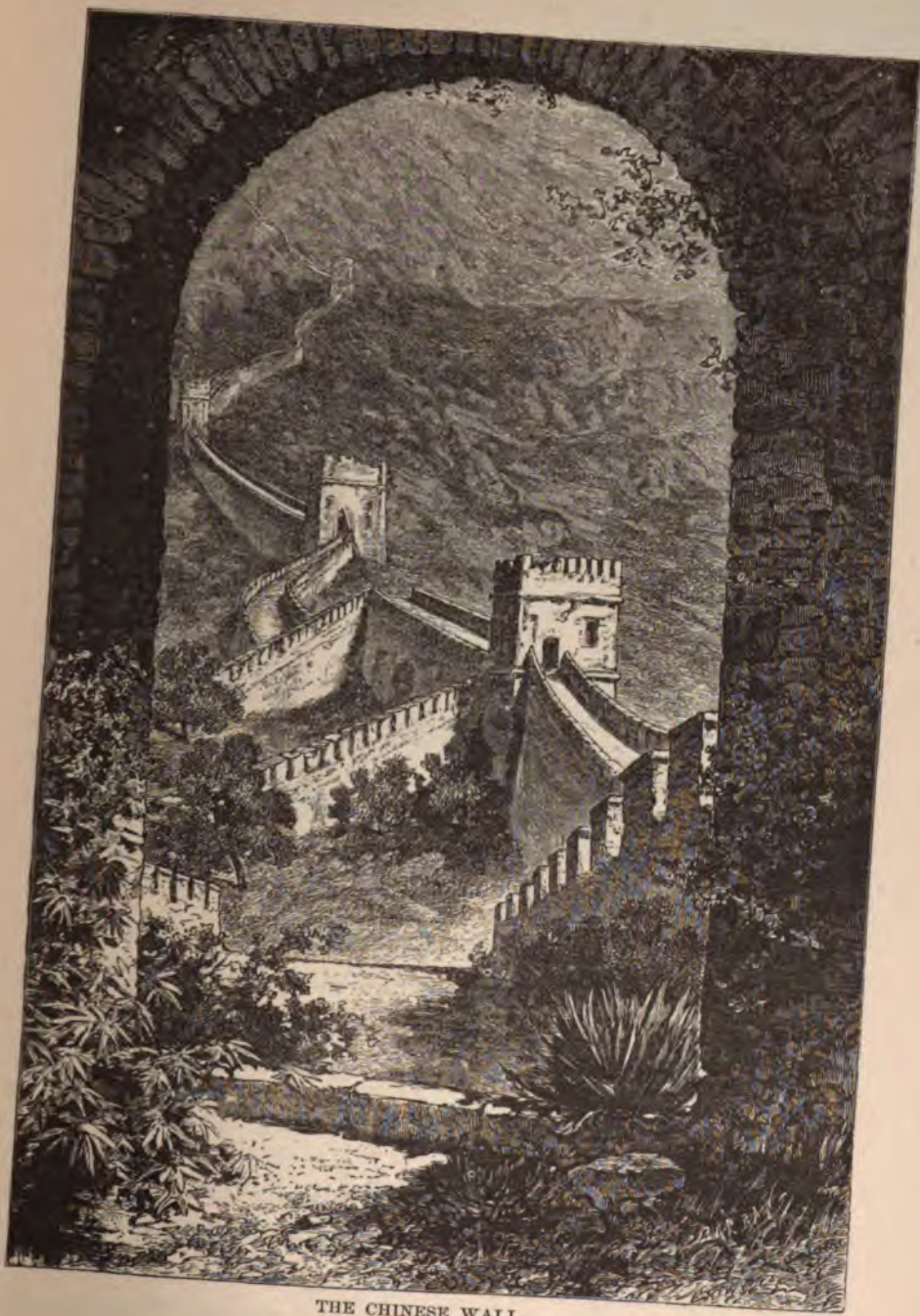
"What did he do, starve to death?" Paul asked.

"No. That was the most unfortunate part of

all. The earth upon which the cathedral was built proved too soft to support such a heavy wall, and one side sank, till, in spite of everything they could do, the whole building fell to the ground not long afterward."

"Three cheers for the wildcat!" Scott exclaimed, coming to himself again. "What then?"

"The English church mission at Foochow leased some land and built a theological seminary upon it, after they had been



THE CHINESE WALL.

allowed a peaceful possession for years. Unfortunately two very serious floods swept over Foochow just then, and every one said the seminary building had disturbed the Foong-shooy, and that it must come down. The authorities did not move quickly enough, so the people got up a mob and literally tore out all the woodwork.

"They hang their pagodas high enough, if they're all like the one we saw at Singapore," said Scott. "What are they for, anyway? They look like fancy church steeples, only they have no churches behind them."

"I once asked a Chinese what they were for, and he replied, 'To keep the dragon still. If we did n't hold him down he'd always be moving round and creating a commotion.'"

"Don't they ever get their own ying-yang of fu-chu or whatever it is, out of order?" asked Scott.

"Most decidedly. It is their life struggle to try and straighten out the errors that constantly occur."

"How do they keep track of themselves, anyway?" Scott asked, for he already found himself quite seriously tangled.

"They have a few general principles, and beyond those they trust to the luck doctors. From the north comes the cold and all that is disagreeable, and that is Yin. That is what they must look out for."

"Well, if ying only comes in a bee-line from the north, why don't they just choose a southern exposure and keep the north door locked?"

"That would do well enough, Scott, but that hills, trees, other houses, high walls, and a little of everything act to drive the spirits one way or another, like a ball bounding round the room. You may throw it straight, and except when the wall

turns it it will go straight, yet in the end it may even come back to the very place from which it started."

"They must draw a long breath when everything is settled and they are ready for housekeeping," said Scott.

"That is quite impossible," replied his friend. "For a very little change among their neighbors may turn them all topsy-



WALKING ON THE WALL.

turvy again. That is one great reason why they are opposed to railroads and telegraph poles and wires."

"That's a fact. A railway train could n't run a mile without smashing a ying-yang or a fu-chu all to pieces, or stepping on a dragon's tail, could it?"

"I would n't snap my fingers to go on shore at Hong Kong except for the sake of getting off this steamer for ten minutes," he added quickly, as another lurch sent him to the opposite

side of the berth. "I don't think the cooking on the 'Tigress' begins to compare with that on the other side." Here the missionary laughed outright, for Scott's lips were growing pale. Paul looked up in surprise. He did not understand the joke, and, as his breakfast had not been so substantial as usual, he was already longing for lunch, and, disliking to hear anything abused, he said, —

"Why, Scott, the rice and curree's good."

"Rice and curree! Oh!" groaned Scott in disgust, and turned his face to the wall.

The missionary felt that it was quite time for them to go back to the old subject again, and continued: "In China the people are often obliged to live outside the walls, for the cities are so full inside that there's no room for them. But they don't go straggling all over the country, as our farmers do in America. They settle together, in densely crowded little villages, all about the large cities. All the relatives of one family will huddle together in one spot, and as fast as the sons grow up they will settle just as close to the rest as possible, so that often very large suburban towns will be peopled entirely by families of one single surname."

"There it is again," said Scott, without turning over. "Just the opposite to all the rest of the world. In America we think the farther off we can get from blood relations the better it is for the family name. Think of going out to Roxbury to see a man by the name of Smith, when you didn't know his first name, and finding the whole of the Highlands nothing but Smiths."

"But that would hardly happen in China, for the family name is not so often used and is much more likely to be forgotten than what we call the Christian name."

"There it is again," growled Scott. "Every blessed thing is upside down. I would n't wonder a bit if we found the whole of them hopping about with their toes in the air and standing on the tips of their pigtailed. Oh! I wish we were in Hong Kong. The storm is growing harder."

"I think it is, beyond a doubt," the missionary replied with a faint smile, as he grimly clutched the side of the berth and braced his feet against the sofa.

"Do you think there's any danger?" Scott asked, anxiously.

"Do you suppose God don't know what he's doing, when the ocean belongs to him?" Paul asked, looking up through the golden hair that had fallen over his forehead, half hiding the blue eyes.

"There may be danger for all that," said Scott, while the missionary, in a low voice, repeated, —

"Except ye become as *little children*." Then he added, "If we were Chinese, we should say the Foong-shooy was out of order and that perhaps we had hit on the wrong topic of conversation. We have been ridiculing the country along whose coast we are sailing. Let us turn about and look at the other side of the Chinese."

"Queues are on one side and slant eyes are on the other. They're Chinese on both sides," replied Scott.

Just then Ling came tumbling in to do his usual morning work, as best he could, while the steamer rolled and pitched harder than ever, and two sailors with heavy irons screwed an iron plate over the window, with only a little circle of thick glass in the centre, making it so dark that one could hardly see another's face.

"What does your name mean, Ling?" Paul asked.

The rest were of course speaking English, and, as Ling was

proud of his power to speak what he thought the most elegant of English, he replied in that language.

"My no blong namee Ling: Hindee man man, he talkee my blong fishee, he talkee my Ling, datee Hindee fish. My blong Tao-sen."

"Well, what does that mean?" Paul asked.

"Tao-sen? He! he! Datee no good namee. Maskee! Too muchee flade."

"Too much afraid of what?" asked Scott, who was beginning to be interested.

"My two day old. Tia-ping soldier come chop-chop. Olee man talkee. 'He no good, flingee way.' Mudder likee my



A TRADING JUNK.

fus-late, she talkee olee man, 'You go topside, my no flingee way.' Mudder catchee my, lun for lifee. Bime by lain come. All blong welly, welly darkee, allee same jus' now. Maskee! soldier go, no see mudder. Two day. Mudder talkee, 'Dissee boy blong Tao-sen — Lun For Lifee.'"

"'Run for Life!' Well, that's a good name and one that you hung to well. It beats even a fish," said Scott, sarcastically. But Paul looked up. Scott understood the look gathering in his brother's eyes, and decided not to say more.

"How's the weather, Tao-sen?" the missionary asked, pleasantly.



THE LONG STREET OF SHOPS.

“Water—water—plenty high. Too muchee boblee, my no likee,” replied the Chinaman solemnly, as he left the room.

“There’s too much bobbing for me, too,” moaned Scott, as he tried to brace himself in a more comfortable position.

“The Chinese would quote for us their proverb that one cannot rivet a nail in a parsnip,” said the missionary, laughing

“Well, what a set of fools the Chinese are, anyway,” Scott muttered again a moment later.

“That’s just it, Scott. They look a little worse to you in this light, doubtless, than they did when we talked in the bright sunshine of the Bengal Bay. But like almost every one in our world, you are taking the very little that I have told you, and all on one side, and of only what I saw about one little city, as representing the actual head, heart, hands, and feet of the largest nation on earth, represented by over four hundred million people. Take the rats, cats, and puppy pies, for instance. A man who had lived in China for nearly twenty years and made long journeys into the interior told me that he had never seen such a thing, and after making many inquiries had never heard of the flesh of one of those animals being eaten except as medicine, though it is doubtless true that they *are, sometimes*. Milk is hardly ever used, and they look with disgust when we drink it, just as we are disgusted when they eat pickled tadpoles. Tea is the great national drink under all circumstances and everywhere.”

“Do they ever drink liquor?” Scott asked, with an eye to information for his mother’s society.

“There is one kind of wine made in China that is just within the limits of intoxicants, and from it they distil a spirit which is very intoxicating. They do not get drunk, like other men,

and make the street hideous with noisy broils. They take it all out in opium."

"Did n't you say that the Chinese wanted to stop the opium trade?" asked Scott.

"The struggle to keep it out was the occasion of that first



IN THE BAZAAR.

war with China, in which England slaughtered so many natives. First they tried to accomplish it through diplomacy. They urged the Emperor to legalize the trade and only charge duty upon it, telling him what a vast source of revenue it would be to him."

"What did he say?" Paul asked, astonishing the missionary with the fact that he was paying very close attention to what he thought must be a dry topic for one so young.

“ His reply was this: ‘ I will not use as a means of revenue that which brings misery upon my people.’ ”

“ Bully for him ! ” said Paul, enthusiastically.

“ Well, they ’re a dirty set, anyway,” Scott interrupted, “ if they ’re anything like all the Chinese I ’ve ever seen.”

“ That is the most disagreeable feature of Chinese life,” replied the missionary. “ The houses, even of the rich, are always dusty. Their underclothes are rarely changed, and such a thing as clean bed linen is almost unheard of. The poor often wear their clothes, not only day and night, but every day from fall to spring, only adding more as the weather grows colder. They have no fires, such as we have, you know, only little earthen pails of live charcoal to carry in their hands to keep their fingers warm, and in the colder districts they have a large earthen frame in the centre of the room, in which they put a little fire to heat it, and then sleep upon it.”

A little later Scott asked, “ Have they really accomplished anything grand in China ? ”

“ They built the Great Wall,” replied the missionary.

“ Well, what does that amount to ? ” Scott asked, a little scornfully.

“ It does not amount to much to-day, perhaps,” replied his friend. “ Yet, after all, it is the only artificial structure on the earth that would attract our attention if we could sail in a balloon about the world six thousand feet above the surface. It is almost as long as a straight line from New York City to Omaha.”

“ Cæsar ! that ’s something ! ” Scott exclaimed. “ But what is it made of ? ”

“ A little of everything. Sometimes it is of solid rock, with great towers, sometimes of brick. Then it is brick with mud

filled in, and in some places it is only a thick clay wall, with brick towers."

"How in the world could they ever get soldiers enough to guard it?" Scott asked.

"That was just the trouble. They did not seem to think of



THE BEAUTIFUL MARBLE BRIDGE.

that. When the elephant was bought and paid for, they found it was of little value, after all. It is just a monument, to-day, of the unequalled patience and perseverance, which are the soul and spirit of that enormous empire. It is like much that one sees everywhere in China; a stupendous relic of human toil, which can neither protect them from their enemies nor benefit their friends."

"Did you ever see it?" asked Paul.

"Yes, I have seen it, my boy, and I will tell you a little about it, for your curly hair will turn gray as mine, very like, before anything brings you so near to it as I have been."

Paul settled himself contentedly in his sofa berth, realizing that he was claiming his share, and the berth was so narrow that he succeeded better than the others in keeping still.

"I went to the great city of Peking in a Chinese junk, or at least as far as Tientsin."

"Well, what is a junk?" asked Paul.

"It is a vessel, Paul, a native ship. We were going up the river to Peking, but I was not allowed to go, for some reason, so they left me at the great free port, Tientsin. That is where the English made three fierce attacks before they succeeded in forcing the Chinese to allow them to land. It is one great bazaar to-day. Every street is lined with shops. There some brother missionaries took me in a river boat up to the great capital of China."

"Peking is not the largest city in the world," Scott interrupted. "London beats it all to pieces now."

"Well, I don't care if it does," Paul exclaimed with American energy; "I'm listening to about the wall."

"Bother the wall!" said Scott, for the steamer gave a lurch that one would have thought must have wrenched her from stem to stern. "That's the worst one yet. We shall all go to pieces directly."

"Well, I want to hear about the wall first," said Paul, decidedly.

"When we reached Peking we found it quite large enough, even if London is larger. The word means the capital of the

north, and it is there where the Son of Heaven lives, as they sometimes call the Emperor."



DROMEDARIES!

"Did you see him?" Paul asked.

"No, indeed, they are very few indeed, even among the highest officials of the empire, who ever see the Son of Heaven."

guess, with Dhondaram," replied the boy, with a soft and musical intonation, when that charmed word was spoken. "We passed long droves of dromedaries coming out of Tartary."

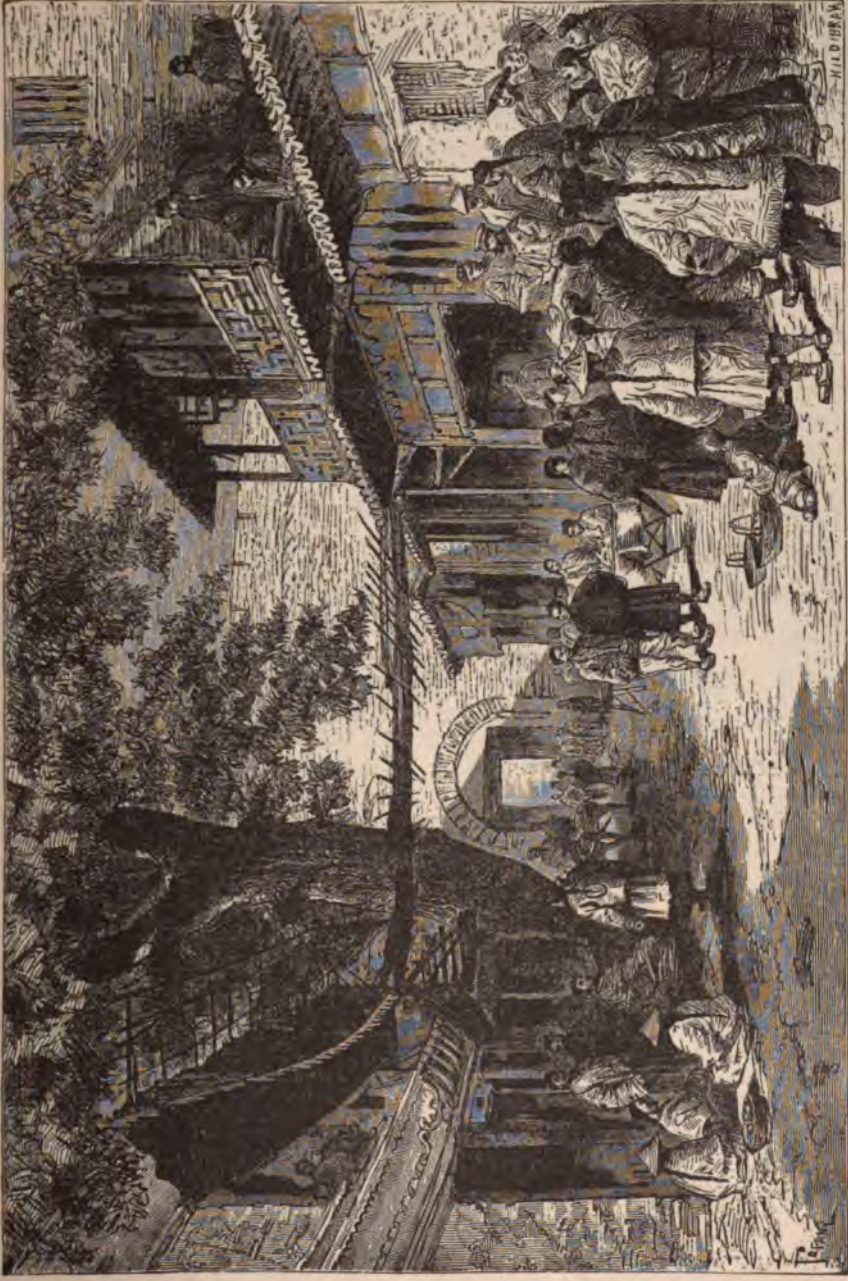
"What were they loaded with?" Scott asked, with his usual eye to business.

"Nothing but empty sacks. They go over the hills and far into Siberia, with heavy burdens of tea for Russia. The sale of tea to Russia alone amounts to more than the entire importation of opium. But Russia has nothing which they want, in return, except her furs. So when they do not bring furs they come with the silver.

"How far away could you see the wall?" asked Paul.

"Where it climbed the hills and its watch-towers rose on the summits, we could see it a long way off. It is thirty feet high, and thirty feet broad at the base. Where we reached it the base of the wall is constructed of enormous blocks of granite and red quartz. One can easily mount the wall from the China side, but from Tartary it is almost impossible without ladders. On the top it was paved with square brick in a broad platform, nearly twenty feet wide. On the side of this platform toward Tartary there is a parapet almost as high as a man's head, to protect those on the wall from an enemy beyond. But the old wall is crumbling, and many of the bricks are gone, while the spaces are covered with white and yellow and coal-black lichens. As we walked along the top of the Great Wall the whole surface gradually disappeared under a dense growth of low shrubs and ferns. Nature is jealous of this angular fortification, cutting so far upon her surface, and has done her best to put it out of sight."

"How did they defend the wall?" asked Scott.



IN THE STREET.

"With cannon, of course, Scott. Have you forgotten that the Chinese invented gunpowder?"

"Did n't know but it was with fire-crackers," Scott replied, with a penitent smile.

"But the cannon themselves have almost forgotten about gunpowder," his friend continued. "Some of them on the top of the platform are sunk three feet deep in the shrubbery, and some of them that are mounted in niches in the old wall are literally buried in a dense mass of ferns and mosses."

"'T would be rather hard to load them in a hurry," suggested Scott.

"That would not be necessary," replied the missionary, "for we found old cannon there, moss-grown to the muzzle, that were already loaded with charges which had lain there under nature's care for centuries."

"Wonder if moss makes good wadding?" said Scott.

"Some more about the wall," said Paul, impatiently.

"Well, as we walked along we came upon a tower that looked precisely like a two-story house perched there, with rooms and everything ready for some one to live in."

"And nobody in it?" asked Paul.

"No, no one had been there for many years, I think. Then we came upon a place where the old wall had all fallen away, leaving some heavy beams exposed. The beams were placed there centuries ago and had outlasted even the brick and granite, for they were as sound as though they had just come from the saw-mill. Architecturally it is a most remarkable treasure. The bricks under the windows are laid in regular semicircles; the walls are laid in diagonally; the sills are granite. There are gutters to carry off the water and stone outlets in the

shape of dragon's heads, all just as scientifically arranged as it could be done by our very best architects to-day."

"That's something to talk about," said Scott.

"What's on the other side?" asked Paul.

"Beyond the wall stretch the vast wastes of Tartary."

"Tartary!" said Scott. "That's where the fellows came from who are running China."



OPIUM DEALERS.

"Yes, the Tartar dynasty held the throne for over two hundred years."

"How long did it take to build the wall?" asked Paul.

"That I do not know," replied his friend, "but a legend says that over a million men at once were employed in its construction."

Scott whistled.

"How far is it from Peking?" asked Paul.

"Not more than three days, at most."

"You did n't tell us much about Peking," said Scott.

"Indeed, I know very little myself," replied the missionary. "What could one see of London in three days, especially if he did not know a word of the language? But Peking does not look like a city when you see it from the hills. It covers such an enormous district, and the great imperial city inside is so huge and so open, and there are beautiful gardens everywhere, it looks like a vast plain with scattered villages here and there."

"It must be pretty," said Paul.

"It is pretty from a distance, my boy. But distance lends enchantment to the view. It is very different when one is once inside."

"Do they make any modern improvements?" asked Scott.

"Some of the wealthy are beginning to appreciate the value of luxuries," replied his friend. "We visited one nabob in Peking who had his house lighted with gas, and was very proud of it. His whole establishment, in fact, was carried on upon a thoroughly European style. He was a great chemist and had a fine laboratory. Then we went down the Pei Ho River again, to Tientsin. There was a terrible massacre of the English, there, a few years afterward. Ever since that time English, French, Russian, and Japanese ships of war have constantly been kept in the harbor there."

"Did you ever see any one smoke opium?" Paul asked.

"Yes, I have seen them smoking it, often, on the street or at inns, but I only once went into a real opium-den. A servant came up and asked how many pipes we would have, and when we said that we were only visitors and did not smoke, no one seemed surprised, and we walked about the room where the smokers were lounging, some on low cots, some sitting on the floor, and now and then one standing up, laughing, talking, or *trying* to sing. But they did not seem to care a straw how

much we looked at them. Many of them did not even lift their eyes."

"It gives beautiful dreams, does n't it, to smoke opium?" asked Scott.

"No, it don't," Paul answered, promptly.

"What do you know about it, Paul?" asked Scott, a little impatiently.



OPIUM SMOKING IN HIGH LIFE.

"I know a great deal, for I have seen lots of people eating opium in India," Paul answered, decidedly.

"He evidently knows more than a great many," said the missionary, nodding approvingly. "It is a very mistaken notion that opium-smoking gives delightful dreams. It does not even put an old smoker to sleep at all. It simply increases the sensibilities. It gives new life. It takes away pain for a time and makes an old man feel young again. But even that effect lasts but a little while, and wears away more and more quickly the longer one smokes, while it very soon has no effect

at all unless the quantity is increased. Then just as soon as the first effect is gone it leaves one feeling utterly miserable, in a way that nothing but more opium will set him right again."

"How much does one smoke?" asked Scott.

"That depends upon how long he has been smoking. An old veteran, who is breaking down in body and mind, will smoke four or five pipes at a time, and do it four or five times a day."

"Must cost something," said Scott.

"That's the worst of it. That is where the ruin that it brings goes further than the one man who should be punished for the foolishness. When one begins it costs but little and yields him a certain amount of enjoyment in return. Then the habit fastens upon him and grows stronger. The more he smokes the less able he is to earn money and the more money he needs and must have in some way. A man in Fouchow sold his daughter, while I was there, to buy opium, and when that money was gone and he was absolutely wretched, he sold his wife to get money enough to go to a city in the interior where there was a doctor who professed to cure people of the habit."

"Seems to me that's rather an odd way of raising money," said Scott.

"It might be in America, but it is quite possible in China. When one man sells his wife to another it has simply the force of a divorce. In a sense they all sell their daughters. The parents of daughters are not their guardians and receive no assistance from them in their old age. The girl, when she is married, becomes at once a part of her husband's family. So it has naturally come about that among the poorer classes, who have to think of every cent, the cost of bringing up a

daughter is an investment that must bring a return from the family which takes the daughter away, till it has virtually grown into selling the daughter to the husband's family. Don't imagine, however, that it is what the same thing would be in America, for in reality a more loving and domestic people than the Chinese it would be hard to find; and if we could compare the sales of wives in China with the divorces granted by the courts in America, I fancy we should find our own country



OPIUM PIPE.

far more free in breaking up families than China, though in America we have not a shadow of the excuse which the Chinese have, for there the parents arrange the entire matter, and the husband never sees his wife till the marriage ceremony is almost completed."

"They have little bits of feet, don't they? Ling, I mean Tao-sen, says so," observed Paul.

"Most of the women of China have their feet pressed all out of shape by bandages when they are four or five years old. There are some who do not, and I think the custom is going out of fashion. The higher classes have feet only about three

inches long; the poorer, who need to walk more, are left a little larger. If you try to walk about on your heels, without touching your toes, you'll look like a Chinese woman when walking."

"That's just a barbaric outrage!" exclaimed Scott.

"It does not injure the health half so much as tying one's self up about the waist, as our women do," replied the missionary.



A LITTLE FOOT.

"Then they have very long finger-nails, Tao-sen says," added Paul.

"Yes, they allow their finger-nails to grow long, in a fashion that rose in an idea of indicating that they did not belong to the laboring classes, and the most aristocratic ladies will often wear little silver cases on the ends of their fingers, beautifully ornamented, to protect their nails."

"Tell us about something like the wall," said Paul.

"Only something that's good for something," added Scott.

"Well, there's the great canal," replied the missionary. "It was made over a thousand years ago."

"Does it come up to the Erie Canal?" asked Scott.

"In the first place it is over twice as long!"

Scott whistled again, in spite of the pitching of the steamer.

"Heavy storms once washed in the banks and clogged it so that for a time it was out of use till another energetic Emperor came upon the throne. Then three hundred thousand men were set at work upon it. They turned the whole great Yun-Ho River out of its course, sent it rushing through the canal, cleared it

out completely, and turned the river back again in less than seven months."

"That's something like business," remarked Scott.

"And after all, the system of government and code of laws of China are China's most magnificent work. They will bear the strictest comparison with European nations. The very length of time that the nation has endured and prospered under them is proof enough. They have stood the test of time longer than any others which man has devised. They have bound together under one common rule a population with which the world affords no parallel. China has an authentic history reaching back more than three thousand years, and, in spite of revolutions inside and wars outside, she is precisely the same to-day that she was then."



THE FEET WALKING.

"They may have been mighty smart fellows then, but they're dreadfully behind the times just now," said Scott, determined not to yield his point. Here Tao-sen opened the door with the remark,—

"Hi! Mellican man sickee? no eatee? chow-chow allee leady!"

"I want some," shouted Paul, as, tumbling from the sofa, he caught the Chinese servant's hand and pulled himself out of the state-room. Scott and the missionary attempted to follow him, but gave it up.

The saloon was black as night. Two lanterns were hanging over the only table that had been prepared, for all the glass, above, had been covered with thick canvas and heavy wooden shutters. One officer was eating, but he looked tired and stern.

It took away Paul's appetite, and very soon Tao-sen brought him back to the state-room. The afternoon wore on and into night. Supper was brought to Paul on the sofa, but before he had fallen asleep the captain looked in. His face was brighter.

"Weathered the gale, lad?" he asked, touching Paul under the chin with his sea-worn finger.

"I want to go on deck," said Paul.

"All, right my lad! to-morrow you shall go. The worst is over. The barometer's rising. The 'Tigress' is the girl to do this work. To-morrow, my lad, 't'll be all right. Wait till to-morrow. Good night."

"To-morrow," said Paul, as he fell asleep.

"To-morrow," said Scott, as he found himself growing drowsy.

And to-morrow came, but all that was left of the deck of the "Tigress" was not where they could stand on it.

CHAPTER VII.

TAO-SEN TO THE RESCUE.

THE wind was still blowing a gale when the sun went down, but the "Tigress," having been blown far out of her course, turned to face it the moment it gave signs of decreasing, and, with every pound of steam pressure that the fires and the boilers could force, she headed again for Hong Kong and plunged into the waves and the eye of the wind. The danger being over, and only a struggle of steam against wind being the question of the hour, the worn-out officers and the crew not needed for immediate work turned in and slept, as men can sleep only when nature has been strained to the utmost and muscles have been like iron for hours.

The whole steamer seemed soundly sleeping, all but the mighty engines, that thrilled and shook the enormous frame of the "Tigress" as they groaned and crowded harder and harder upon the great iron shaft that sent the propeller whirling faster and faster through the water. The wind rushed against her in a hurricane, but the "Tigress" lay close to the water. The sea had worn itself out to crush her, and now she like a very tigress was dashing headlong into the great waves of that turbulent China Sea. But the danger was over. The good-night cheer of the captain had spread from lip to lip, and in that comfortable assurance every one slept and slept soundly.

Possibly some of the good or evil spirits that were forever circling about his shaven pate or pulling his pigtail disturbed

the slumbers of the slant-eyed Tao-sen; at all events, he alone did not sleep. He lay for a time before Paul's door, as usual; then the shadowy Celestial, in his thick, soft-soled shoes that never made a sound upon the floor, was flitting along the saloon, taking advantage of the position of the steamer, flying along a corridor or standing still, leaning well over to one side, like an inverted pendulum, for a born sailor was Tao-sen. Then again he lay down at Paul's door, and again he wandered here and there, never stumbling, never striking a chair or a table, no matter how the steamer might reel, careen, or plunge. Not a sailor could have done better. Never a sound did Tao-sen make in his meandering, but he kept on wandering. Something in the Foong-shooy was wrong. He had heard the captain assuring the passengers that the worst was over and that the next day all would be calm again, but he knew better. "This yin-yang of the sea," said he to himself; "what does a red-haired Western devil know about it?" That is a name which means no disrespect, but is universally applied, in national scorn, perhaps, but nothing more, to the blond people who come to Chinese shores. Thus Tao-sen argued with himself. "The captain may do very well in calm waters, or even in a storm in his own oceans, about the little island which he comes from. But the Chinese is not like a red-haired Western devil. China is not like his little island, the China Sea is not like his oceans. What does he know? Nothing, absolutely nothing. I cannot sleep. I feel it. I know it. The great dragon is beneath us. He is rolling about. He is mad. The wind comes from the north. It is yin. It brings no good. We are facing it. We are fighting it. There is no dragon head upon the prow. There are no eyes upon the steamer. The yin is against us. We are lost."

Every Chinese junk has a dragon's head or some ungainly contrivance on the prow, and a semblance of an eye on one side or both, just aft the stem, and above the water line.

The writer was once delayed for hours upon the Yangtse-kiang, the great Blue River, while carpenters fitted a new eye upon the junk on which he had taken passage for the interior. When patience was utterly exhausted over the senseless delay, and he gave vent to his feelings in words, it was only to receive this smiling reply, in that execrable dialect called pigeon English, spoken by natives and foreigners along the coast, from the fat and happy captain, sitting contentedly smoking his little pipe upon the deck



TAO-SEN AS A GENTLEMAN.

"Sposee no hab got eye, how can see? No can see how my sailee? You no likee, more better you go walkee."

Thus Tao-sen had every cause to believe that the "Tigress" was in danger, notwithstanding the assurance of the red-haired devil of the west that all was right and all would be well tomorrow.

Scott had said "Tomorrow," and been satisfied.

Paul had said "Tomorrow," and asked no more.

The pigtailed Tao-sen repeated, "To-morrow, to-morrow, hee! hee! To-morrow neber come. Ebly day b'long just now, allee same to-day, yesterday, ebly day one day gone. To-morrow ebly day one day more no come yet. Hee! hee! To-morrow, neber come. My tinkee be all light to-morrow." Then he fell back in his mother tongue again and mother reasoning, and he knew that something was wrong.

And what, what would any true Celestial do under such circumstances? He would do just precisely what Tao-sen did. He would endeavor to appease the offended spirit by every means in his power.

If he were on shore or among his fellows, with no danger of interruption from foreign powers, he would beat gongs and rattle pans, and fire fire-crackers and guns, too, if he had them. Anything to make a noise. He would wail and howl and send up rockets and run about, shouting, trying to frighten the spirits away. If that did not do it, he would offer them rice to eat, thinking they might be hungry. He would put the vessel about, this way and that, and try to satisfy them. He would kill a white cock, scatter his blood upon the water, and nail his head and some of his feathers to the mast. He would take some wine and throw it into the sea. He would do a hundred other things, and some one of them would surely please and appease the monster, or else frighten him out of his senses and send him away to disturb some one less brave and persistent in resisting him.

But Tao-sen knew very well that for any such demonstrations he would have his pigtail smartly pulled, be shaken out of his thick-soled shoes, and possibly soused in a tub of water or have the ship's hose turned on to him, and half dead be dropped

somewhere in disgrace to gather his senses together as best he might and see if he could behave better next time.

He had been through all this experience more than once before, and his fear of the angry dragon who lives in the sea was not so intense as his desire to keep himself out of the tub of water and keep his queue comfortably on the top of his shaven pate.

Still something was wrong. Tao-sen was frightened beyond expression, and as he was not really Ling, a fish, and could not swim far under water and did not intend to swim at all if he could help it, and as, though he was really Tao-sen, he could not run for his life when there was no place to run to, he did the next best thing, in fact the only thing that he could do, he prepared to burn joss-papers.

Joss means, indifferently, god, any god and every god, and joss-papers are little sheets of paper that will ignite easily and burn quickly, sometimes plain and very combustible tissue, sometimes gilt and silver sheets with a wash of powder to help them expire. Sometimes they have pictures of particular gods upon them, sometimes prayers, written to order, by a priest, for a specific purpose, sometimes indifferent prayers, or only propitiatory sentences, which will be good on almost all occasions, sometimes they have nothing at all on them; but always they are joss-papers, and always by burning them one sends them by a direct and infallible post to the exact place where he wishes them to go; but not always to meet with success, for sometimes when one burns a plain joss-paper the joss is not satisfied and wants a silver one, sometimes when silver is burned he is just avaricious enough to think it should have been gold, sometimes the picture does not please him, and sometimes he is just chronicky enough not to be satisfied even

with all the golden joss-papers that a poor fellow can scrape together money to buy, and insists upon going ahead and doing just as he is doing, in spite of a whole bonfire.

But Tao-sen did not mean to stand on ceremony. He meant to test the matter, and at least give the furious dragon a chance to be good-natured, if he had a mind to.

Now Tao-sen was not rich nor was he very poor. He had no gilt joss-papers, but he had some silver sheets or tinsel, which were just as good, for what did the dragon know, whether he paid one cent or ten for a paper, after he had burned it up, so long as it glistened well and looked like silver. Then he had some very fine, bright red joss-papers, like the red sheet on the outside of packs of fire-crackers, all covered over with names and sentences. He had not read them. He had not the least idea what was written there, nor did he suppose that the dragon would know much about it, either. He had bought them already put up in packages for sailors' use, and felt sure it must be something appropriate.

Into his dingy, dirty little bunk he went, in the dingiest and dirtiest corner of the servants' quarters. Had Scott once seen that place, he would never again have wondered that Tao-sen was very fond of sleeping on the mat before Paul's door, though that was not at all the reason why Tao-sen slept there, for dinginess and dirtiness were like home to him. He would have died of homesickness had that little bunk been painted and frescoed, made bright with a little electric lamp, and made soft with a patent spring mattress, which was warranted to turn upside down or inside out and never break or rust or sag away in deep hollows, and had it been covered with a soft hair mattress, guaranteed to be all hair and the best of hair, with no husks on the bottom and no excelsior in the middle, and had

this been surmounted with sheets, real linen sheets, white as snow and cold as Greenland, and soft woollen blankets right from an English sheep's back, all a pale lemon color in the centre, with bright stripes at the top and bottom, and entirely hidden by a white counterpane, all folded under beautiful pillow covers, embroidered and decorated, that were not pillow covers at all, but simply shams, which any one could see at a glance were never made to sleep on, and never made to wash any oftener than was absolutely necessary, and which any one must be a wild bohemian not to know enough to take off and lay somewhere, though there is no place in the world to lay them, every time he goes to bed. All this would have been neither more nor less than a dose of poison for poor Tao-sen. He would have died. But there was no danger of too much kindness killing him, not at least on board the "Tigress," or anywhere else, for that matter, for he was one of those beings constructed on purpose for quartermasters and chief stewards to kick and cuff. For every one knows that quartermasters and chief stewards must kick and cuff somebody.

Nobody ever thought of so much as looking into Tao-sen's dingy and dirty bunk, except to hunt around or smell around to see if he had been stealing opium. And if Tao-sen ever did steal opium, which he never did, he knew enough to hide it somewhere else. So that little bunk looks just the same at the end of the voyage as it did at the beginning, and every day and every hour and every minute during the voyage. You might think that at least it would grow a little dingier and dirtier as time went on, but it was just as dingy and dirty the very first day as dinge and dirt could make it, and how in the world could it be any more so?

Tao-sen did not know that anything was out of order there.

Indeed, he had a strong conviction that everything in that little bunk was in the very best of order. It was six feet long and three feet broad, and just three feet below the deck above. All that Tao-sen owned in the wide, wide world was in that bunk, and as a natural result Tao-sen could have told you in an instant and with his eyes shut within six feet of where anything in the world that belonged to him might be found. How much better than that could the most careful spinster do, who has an exact place for everything, and everything exactly in its place? Six feet, perhaps, certainly no more than that, and six feet is not much. In less than ten minutes, all in the dark, and in all the storm, Tao-sen had put his hands upon every identical thing that belonged to him. There was a shoe in one corner. It was entirely new, a shoe which he bought the last time he was in port in China. The thick sole was white as snow and it had a bright green top, with a dragon stamped on the side. But there was no shoe to match it in the bunk. The other one Tao-sen lost overboard the very first day out. A quartermaster was shaking him and pulling his pigtail at the time, and while he was kicking and howling the shoe went overboard. He groaned as he thought of it, when his hand touched that one vacant shoe. Then there was a pretty little skull-cap, which he wore on state occasions, and three or four packs of cards, not complete packs, that any one could use, but parts of packs that passengers had thrown away, and some old newspapers, for the Chinese are very fond of saving all kinds of printed matter, no matter what the printing amounts to. Then there were other things that never were and never could have been Chinese, or of any value to a Chinaman except that everything, no matter what it is, is of value to a Chinese. Tao-sen came by them honestly, no doubt, for though he had often and often been punished for stealing because some-

thing was stolen, and on general principles it must have been Tao-sen who stole it, there was no one who ever really knew or even really thought that he had ever taken anything that did not belong to him. Of these particular articles, when questioned by the chief steward, who found them on one of his annual searches, Tao-sen declared that various passengers had given them to him. Upon general principles the chief steward called him a thief, declared he had stolen them, and as he himself had just been reprimanded by the captain, he took occasion to relieve his burdened self-esteem by pulling Tao-sen's pigtail and shaking him. Then as the articles were not of the least value in the world, he tossed them back into the dingy, dirty little bunk, and went about his duty like a true British seaman that he was. Amid all this rubbish Tao-sen could sleep as soundly as a child.

"Dis blong fus-late; you Tao-sen welly luck boy!" he was wont to murmur to himself, night after night, as he settled himself to sleep in such comfortable quarters; and of late he had slept upon the mat before Paul's door, leaving all these treasures unguarded, not because he liked that bed any better, but because with all his heart, and a human heart, though it did beat under a pigtail, he loved Hari-Paul better than all his worldly goods; yes, better than all the wide world beside.

After fumbling for a while he hit upon the two packages of precious joss-papers and within six feet of where he knew they were, all the time, at the foot of the bunk instead of at the head, where he began his search, and the next thing was where to burn them.

In the saloon? There was a watchman there. Of course he was asleep; a watchman always is asleep when he is supposed to be awake. But he would wake up quick enough if there were any chance of catching Tao-sen at some mischief

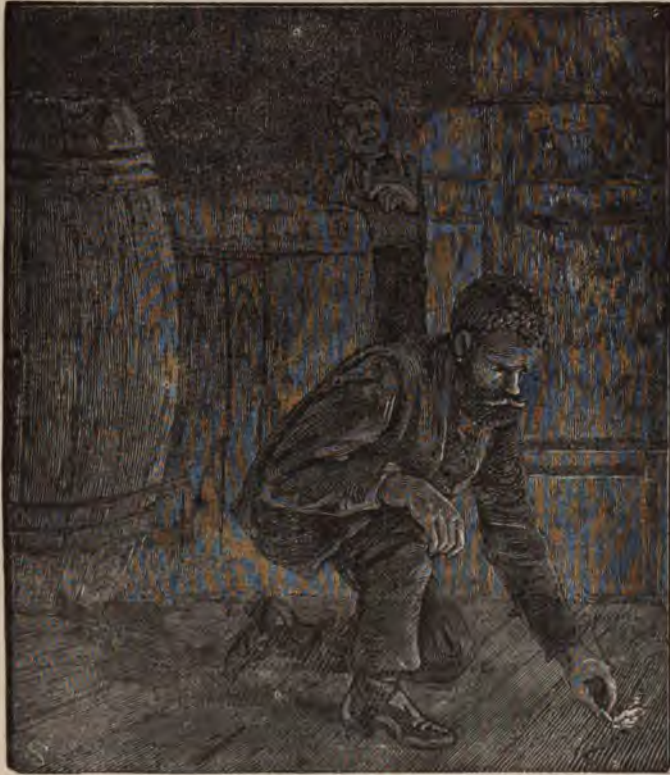
and any likelihood of an opportunity to pull Tao-sen's pigtail. He had tried that before, and knew very well what the result would be.

Should he burn them on the deck? The doors were bolted down for the night. He could not get up there, and if he could the waves were running wild there, just about as they chose, and Tao-sen had no idea of wetting his feet of his own free will. They got themselves wet often enough at the free will of some quartermaster.

Where then? He knew of one place where there were no waves and where there was no watchman, and if there were a watchman there he was sure to be asleep, and if he were not asleep he was certainly playing cards in the forecastle just above, or even if he were not playing cards, of one thing Tao-sen was certain, he would not be at his post of duty, for that post of duty was one that sailors did not like to lean against after dark. It was "welly, welly darkee" there, as Tao-sen solemnly observed to himself. Of course English sailors are not superstitious, for none but Chinese are so foolish as that, but the ugly hole between decks, on a steamer, just under the forecastle and over a cargo of opium, where the way freight is stowed, is not an interesting spot at any hour.

Tao-sen knew of a very short cut by which he could reach there, and thither he turned his steps, his joss-papers in one hand and just one match in the other. It was all he had, but if it succeeded in lighting one paper he would not lose the fire till the very last paper was burned, unless the storm should cease and the dragon be satisfied before that time. Those joss-papers were all he had. They had cost him a round sum, and his wages for the entire voyage would hardly more than replace them. He might have saved himself alone by getting himself into a life-

preserver; but he was going to save the ship, too, if he could, though it cost every sheet, all the bright red papers and all the glistening tinsel. There was something almost a little heroic in what he was doing, considering the economical principles born in



TAO-SEN SEES THE EVIL SPIRIT.

his blood, and the vast sacrifice that the burnt offering would really represent. He did not hesitate, however, but steadily kept on, as fast as the wrangling waves would allow him, till he reached that disagreeable vacancy.

Tao-sen stopped upon the very outskirts the moment he reached a point where, with safety, he could burn his offering to the dragon. He had no idea of going so far that he could not

turn and run if occasion required, for, beyond a doubt, every black hair that supported his queue was already wriggling about in a most annoying way. He bent forward to rub his match gently along the soft sole of his shoe, when, surely, if his hair did not literally stand on end, it was because there was so much pig-tail hanging upon it that it was absolutely impossible.

Suddenly a spark flickered and flashed at the opposite end of the vacancy. Was some one else burning joss-papers? Even Tao-sen did not believe that there was any one else on board foolish enough to do that, unless among the Chinese coolies, forming a part of the crew. He never associated with them, for Tao-sen was not a coolie. He was of far too aristocratic birth for that, and at best they could not have come down there. But in the flash of the little spark he could now plainly see a grim visage, ghost, goblin, dragon, or something; the self-same visage he had seen in the hold when he went to smell the opium, with bushy hair, bright eyes, and sharp, white teeth.

He did not howl, simply because he was too absolutely and thoroughly frightened. The spark sank down to the floor. It touched something that caught the fire as readily as one of Tao-sen's joss-papers would have done had he given it an equal chance. Then the match was blown out and the figure disappeared, and all that Tao-sen heard was a low voice saying, "Now for the boat!"

Tao-sen stood there as though he were frozen to death. Only his two eyes were rolling about, precisely like the porcelain eyes of a Chinese wax doll, when you lay it on its back and then lift it up again, only that no one was laying Tao-sen down and then lifting him up again, for he was literally riveted to the spot where the two soft, thick soles of his shoes rested on that lower deck. He watched the spark, and the spark seemed to be watching

him, yet it crept farther and farther away from him. That was a comfort. In his fright he had forgotten that he was Tao-sen, and that Tao-sen was on the royal mail steamship "Tigress" from Calcutta for Hong Kong, and that, under those circumstances, a spark like that, slowly winding its way without any apparent cause, guide, or master, down there among the light cargo between decks, was surely not a desirable feature. He only thought that he had seen a ghost, a demon, a something or other, and slowly under his shaven pate the matter was revolving like a mill, with his rolling eyes for the mill-wheels and his thoughts for the grist, into the fact that this explained the whole matter of the trouble with the "Tigress"; that this evil spirit was making all the mischief, that this trailing spark of fire was one of his diabolical measures, enchanting all sorts of evil to fall upon the "Tigress," and that the quicker it was put out and cast in the sea — the evil spirit, not the spark, for it never once occurred to Tao-sen to put out the spark — the better it would be for Tao-sen and the better it would be for everybody else except the evil spirit. And Tao-sen, the philosopher, stood there, practically pulling Tao-sen's pigtail and kicking Tao-sen with as much energy as ever a quartermaster or steward had done it, that thus, three times, once in the hold just beneath him, once in the saloon at the door of Paul's state-room, and once right here where he was standing, had he beheld the evil spirit, and that never till this minute had it occurred to him that it would be advisable to rid the steamer of this undesirable object. Tao-sen was a fool. Every one else thought so, and now he began to believe that they were right. But the evil spirit must go, and how should he accomplish this? Why, by firing fire-crackers at it; by beating a gong in its ears. It was the simplest thing in the world. But where were the fire-

crackers and where was the gong? Those were treasures that Tao-sen did not possess. And all the time the spark crept farther and farther.

Then Tao-sen remembered that the ghost had said, "Now for the boat." Possibly this was the very last thing it intended to do on the steamer, some grand closing act in the series of afflictions it had brought, and now it was going to leave. But why in a boat? Evil spirits inhabit the wind and the water. That every one knows, even Tao-sen. Had it been taking its departure it would have said, "Now for the wind!" or "Now for the water!" More likely it made its abode in one of the boats on deck, and was only out for an airing when Tao-sen saw it down among the cases of opium. He would bear that fact in mind and investigate those boats in the morning. He would look under the thick canvas covers, carefully drawn over each one of them to keep the water out when the sea ran high or the rain fell. He would find that spirit and give it as good a fright as he himself had received down in the opium hold, but then his philosophy suddenly occurred to him that to-morrow never comes. Possibly he would never do it, after all.

And now the spark began to flash, and sputter, and grow brighter. It was angry, angry, perhaps, with Tao-sen. Then suddenly it disappeared altogether, and its absence really frightened poor Tao-sen more than its presence, for then he at least knew where it was, but now it was somewhere, and for the life of him he could not tell where. It might break out under his very feet. He began to draw them in, and wish he could hang them over his shoulder in some way. He dared not turn and run for his life, for first, and most important, it was totally dark there. He could not run without bumping his head, and he had bumped his head more than once during his life, and knew that

it was not a comfortable sensation. Then, too, it is very uncivil in China to turn one's back upon any one of the least importance; and what in the world was of more importance to Tao-sen at that moment than the evil spirit, or only so much of it as was represented by that spark?

When a caller is leaving a house in China he must sometimes wind by a circuitous route, through halls and courts, before he reaches the outer gate, and his host always accompanies him. All the way he walks sideways and hitches along to be sure and face his host all the time, bowing and begging his host not to come farther with such a miserable man as he, and all the time the host is bowing and declaring that he could not allow such a great and noble and honorable guest to go from his miserable hut alone. That is politeness in China, and thus did Tao-sen begin to creep backward down the narrow passage by which he came, and, inch by inch, he was finally between the heavy beams and frame above the engine, with the strongest stays of the steamer on either side of him. His eyes were painfully wide open and fixed directly before him. He could see nothing, but he was sure that if there were anything to see he should see it, for he was still looking directly down a narrow passage upon precisely the spot where the spark had disappeared. How long before? Surely Tao-sen knew as little about the length of time he had spent there as any one, and no one else knew anything at all about it. But suddenly, just as he was beginning to outgrow his fright, and to think that possibly it was more than half fancy, after all, a little blue sheet of flame shot up far in the distance before him. A little whiff of curling, white smoke followed it. Another flame, like a pillar of fire, rose with a fierce leap from somewhere below. There was a deafening crash, a great sheet of flame, shooting everywhere. The "Tigress"

reeled and trembled, and before his horror-stricken eyes Tao-sen saw those mighty beams and timbers part, the deck above rip open in great seams, and the deck below fly in a thousand fragments, and through a yawning rent in the prow of the proud "Tigress," by the lurid glare, he saw the great waves of the ocean, and heard the gurgle of the angry sea as it rushed into the opium hold.

And what did Tao-sen do? Run for his life, for that was his name. Of course he ran. Where? To his dingy, dirty little bunk, to save his worldly goods, that are everything for here and hereafter to the Chinese? No. There was no time for that. A great wall of water was rushing down upon him. Not with a roar such as sounds along a sand beach when the waves are high, but with a sullen, subtle gurgle, which meant that solid water and no foam was on the way. And above him lurid flames were already lapping their fierce-red tongues in glee over the feast prepared for them in the dry timbers of the stanch "Tigress."

Where then? To the deck, to catch upon the first life-boat, the first spar, the first anything to save himself. That was instinct. That was humanity, not a custom of China, or a fashion in America, but real life everywhere. And Tao-sen was only a miserable specimen of poor, timid humanity, born and bred of a people full of superstition, full of fear, full of all natural propensities, and of course that was what Tao-sen did, yet it was not at all what he did. He suddenly became something more than Tao-sen. A man, whether in China or America, is not a coward when he stands trembling and shrinking before some unseen, ill-understood, half-fancied, and only dreaded danger. When he stands with real and fearful danger, face to face, then he becomes a coward or a man. The Chinese have a proverb that

“a dog in his kennel barks at his fleas, but a dog when hunting does not feel them.” On precisely this same principle Tao-sen forgot his whole catalogue of superstitions in a single breath. It was no more ghost or dragon, but stern reality. His precious joss-papers, all red and tinsel, fell unheeded to the floor, and instead of that great, universal instinct of self-preservation, the one passion took possession of him, which alone, in America or China, can overcome it in a moment of sudden and last extremity. It was love. For what no man under heaven would do for himself, many a man and many a boy, too, has done for another.

Just off the grand saloon, upon the fated “Tigress,” there was a state-room with a little sofa bed. A little golden head, with rosy cheeks and deep blue eyes, was resting on the pillow. Tao-sen loved them. That was all. Thither like the wind he flew. There was no fear, now, of bumping his shaven pate. His feet were swift and sure down the dark passage, up the ladder, through the hall, into the saloon and the state-room door, even before the terrific shock had roused the sound sleepers to a realization that it was not an ugly dream, or only an unusually fierce wave beating against the invincible “Tigress” that had disturbed their rest.

Never a “Hi! yi!” or a “Ya! ha!” escaped his sealed lips; but catching the sleeping boy in his arms, he disappeared again, and shot through the saloon, where a few passengers were already appearing, wondering what the disturbance meant, for the “Tigress” was floundering and reeling; and there were shouts and cries from the sailors on deck.

Up the broad staircase Tao-sen bounded. The door had been burst open by the shock, and as Paul roused to consciousness they reached the deck. It was high above the

waves now, for the prow sank deep in the water, and the bright flames were shooting upward.

"What is the matter?" Paul asked in Hindustani.

"Water! water! Fire! fire!" whispered Tao-sen. "We must go into the ocean."

Paul's mind had been trained by rough experience in India, young as it was, to grasp emergencies, and his quiet nature aided him to think quickly. He thought of Scott.

"Where is Scott?" he asked, as Tao-sen, with nimble fingers, was unloosing one of the heavy frames of wood covering the skylight preparatory to throwing it into the sea to support them.

"He's asleep," replied Tao-sen.

"Asleep!" The frightful thought burst upon Paul with all its force.

"I want to go down there again!" he said.

"No! no! Too late! We shall die!" replied the Chinese servant.

"Scott will die! I want to go! I will go!" Paul replied decidedly, and Tao-sen, only an atom of that great nation whose radical principle is blind obedience, turned from his work, and taking Paul in his arms he returned to the state-room, sure that neither of them would ever come out of it alive. Every inch of the way he had to struggle and fight; for the frightened, despairing, frantic passengers and crew were furiously struggling for the deck. No one but a Chinese could have wound through the crowd, but Tao-sen succeeded. The water was above his knees at the foot of the stairs, but the saloon floor was still lifted too high for it. They reached the state-room. The night lamp still burned behind the ground glass, but Scott was gone. The little trunk was there, bound by cords to its

position against the wall. That was all, but at that moment it suggested to Paul those solemn words his brother had spoken. They had made a deep impression. "If we lose everything else besides, we must save that. It proves papa's innocence. If anything happens to me, be sure that no one else takes this away from you."

"Take that trunk away, Ling!" Paul said, sternly; and Tao-sen, who had now settled into that quiet apathy of his people, so proverbial, when death has really become inevitable, quietly and deftly cut the cords, and in simple obedience, a ruling passion, strong in death, he prepared to lift the trunk upon his shoulders, supposing that it was for the purpose of saving it, if possible, that Paul had returned; but Paul was on his knees in an instant. His little hands pulled up the carpet, and from its hiding-place he drew out the precious package—all carefully sealed in oiled silk—and pushed it inside of his little jacket that buttoned on to his knee breeches; for in the unsteady motion of the steamer, the night before, he had been unable to undress, and had fallen asleep as he lay through the afternoon, on the top of the blanket, on his sofa-bed. There it was perfectly safe; he was ready to go.

Doubtless had Paul been a few years older; had he actually realized the very great and certain danger, and their most critical of all situations; had he, instead of being alone in his state-room with a Chinaman, deadened by national apathy, been in the midst of that tumultuous horde on deck, in all sorts of costumes, from all parts of the world, doing all sorts of everything in trying to save themselves, no matter whose life it might cost if they did it, and consequently doing nothing at all to save themselves or any one else either, this little performance might not have been carried on so quietly, systematically,

and bravely as it was. Possibly it would not have occurred to him at all that he had a brother, or that together they had some very precious papers to save. But without stopping to reason upon this, Paul said, quietly, to Tao-sen, "I am ready to go, now. We must find Scott." And Tao-sen, only a mute, submissive servant, took the child in his arms.

As they reached the saloon the "Tigress" careened far over upon one side. There was a shriek above, a stamping of feet upon the deck; the sound of water rushing over their heads; a torrent came rolling down the stairs. Then all was still. The last soul upon the deck had evidently been swept into the sea. Paul and Tao-sen must have been among the number had they been on deck; but in one instant the Chinese servant was back in the state-room again. It was the highest part of the steamer now, and a new idea seemed to have struck the Celestial. He seized the life-preservers and bound one quickly about Paul, and another about himself. Then he unscrewed the iron deadlight from the square window. A bright glare filled the state-room from the reflection of the fire on the water, and the hot air swept through the open port.

"Hold on to me tight," said Tao-sen. "I'm going through the window and into the water. I must swim and you must not let go till we find something to cling to."

As he stepped upon the sofa-bed he touched an orange, left from Paul's supper, and dropped it into his pocket. Then crawling through the port he drew Paul after him, and prudently placing the boy's hands, not around his neck, where a nervous grip would have strangled him; not on his loose coat, from which the waves might easily have wrenched the little fingers, but close over the end of that eternal queue he squeezed the fingers, to emphasize what he said, and whispered, —

"Little American, hold it fast! It can't come off. The water can't cover you, for you will float in the life-preserver.



GETTING OUT OF THE SHIP.

Only never let go of this. Pull it as the sailors have sometimes. Pull on it with all your might, and Tao-sen will save your life."

Paul did not answer. He only clutched the long, black braid, and shivered, as they slid down into the water. As the

ship had careened to the other side, all the struggling beings on the deck had been swept from the deck on that side, and on this the water was comparatively clear. When the first shock was over, Paul found that he was floating with his head and shoulders quite out of the water. The sea was much calmer. They had passed with the suddenness which always astonishes the new traveller out of the tornado, beyond the circle of the storm, and into the long and quiet waves that roll after it.

Tao-sen, with all his repugnance to the water, was a good swimmer, and instinct taught him to fly from the ship. It was a novel method, but it proved one of the most successful ever adopted, and in half an hour, not very much frightened, except for Scott, Paul found himself seated comfortably on the top of a large packing-box, which had been thrown far out in the explosion, while Tao-sen steadied it with his hands and looked about for more support. The "Tigress" was still burning, though there was no one on board alive, for the flames were devouring the stern. The shouting and cries for help had ceased. Doubtless most of those who an hour before were soundly sleeping on the steamer were now sleeping beneath the China Sea. Paul had escaped this terrible part of a fire at sea by leaving the steamer as he did. But where was Scott? He did not stop to ask what would become of Paul, all alone out there with Tao-sen, for he had that quiet, childish confidence in what great-minded men call "the eternal fitness of things" that made him utterly at rest as to what was in store for him in the by and by, and sitting on that packing-box, he would have said "To-morrow" with just as much assurance as he did in his berth in the "Tigress."

Meanwhile Tao-sen had secured a splintered beam upon one side and a broken spar upon the other, with more than enough

rope tangled upon it to bind the two together about the packing-box, and make a firm and secure throne for his little god with golden hair. Then he crawled out of the water, and with one hand resting on Paul's foot he wound himself up on the broken beam beside the box, rising and falling on the long waves; nothing, after all, but a poor, trembling Chinaman, half dead with superstition, wishing with all his heart that he had his joss-papers again, and a match, or a gong, or a package of fire-crackers, or something or other with which to please or frighten the angry dragon of the China Sea.

Then a boat appeared on the waves as they rose, and disappeared again when they fell away beneath it. Again and again it appeared. It was coming toward them. There were only three on board. Suddenly one of them, with a fearful oath, said in English, "There's the other one."

"Paul! Paul!" cried another voice.

"Scott!" rang loud and clear from the top of the drifting packing-box. Then a bright fork of light from the steamer shot high into the air as the flames reached something more combustible. For an instant the two boys faced each other, eagerly stretching out their hands. Paul would have leaped into the water, but in that bright light he saw more than Scott and started back. Tao-sen saw more, too.

"Datee he!" he muttered in English. "He lightee fire! My see!"

It was the same grim visage, with bushy hair and glistening eyes and sharp, white teeth, that had haunted him so long. But the combustible food that the flame had found was not content to be slowly devoured. There was another explosion, even more terrific than the first. In the brilliant glare great masses of the "Tigress" were seen rising like down into the dark sky.

Fragments fell all about the raft, and a heavy block struck the prow of the little boat, shivering it to atoms.

Scott's eyes at that moment had been fixed upon the raft. It was the work of instinct and of an instant to leap into the water from the crest of the wave and strike out for Paul as boldly and firmly as ever a Beverly boy swam among the waves along that North Shore.

With eager hands Scott was helped on to the impromptu raft.

"Were they coming for me?" Paul asked, trembling.

"Yes; and thank God they are stopped," Scott gasped.

Paul did not need to ask why. Scott had discovered his secret, though he himself but imperfectly understood it.

Then there was a splashing and puffing in the water, and the face of the quartermaster, who Paul so heartily disliked, was seen approaching.

"He must not come; he's one of them," said Scott, fiercely.

"You no come here!" shouted Tao-sen, eagerly, catching the words.

"Why not? I'm drowning!" gasped the struggling man, still pulling for the raft.

"No more loomee! Plenty fullee! Welly, welly sollee!" shouted Tao-sen again, a smile of satisfaction lighting his sad face as he contentedly fingered his queue and complacently contemplated the puffing quartermaster and prepared to resist his approach.

"He will drown," said Paul. "We can give him room. Let him come."

The little voice was command, and reluctantly Scott and Tao-sen saw the quartermaster fasten upon the raft; though, after all, not one of them knew him so well and disliked him so much as Hari-Paul, who had made room for him.

As he caught the raft with one hand and drew his head well above water, he muttered, "I'd 'a' pushed the whole dirty crew o' ye into the water if ye 'd 'a' tried to keep me off." And he began to climb on to the frail raft.

"Look care you!" shouted Tao-sen, suddenly roused from his apathy. "Stopee dare! Chop, chop! You sabe disee ting! Maskee, you stopee dare!" And the sturdy quartermaster did stop, for in Tao-sen's uplifted hand he saw a long blade that glistened in the red light of the burning "Tigress." He did "sabe" that thing thoroughly; and he remembered the massacre of Tientsin and the pirates of the Yellow Sea and the Tai-ping rebellion, and knew well that when his blood was up the Chinaman was not to have his pigtail pulled and be shaken without great discretion.

Thus the raft drifted and the sea rolled and the "Tigress" burned, but more faintly now and low upon the water; but the flames still lit up the black night for a great distance, when Tao-sen remembered the orange in his pocket and gave it to Paul, warning him in Hindustani to eat but a little and save the rest, for it was all they had, and he might want it much before they found any more.

Paul did not care to eat it. He held it firmly in his hand. The quartermaster saw it.

"Lad, gimme a pull at that orange," he muttered. "My mouth 's like a cinder suckin' salt water."

Paul bent forward to obey. Tao-sen on one side and Scott on the other quickly extended their hands to prevent it.

"Gimme that orange, or I'll—" the quartermaster shouted, and with a sudden leap he placed his knee on the beam and his hand on the box at Paul's feet. A flame shot up from the "Tigress"; then suddenly all was black. The ship had gone

to the bottom. Something in that total darkness sounded like a groan, nearer than the gurgle of the water that followed the sinking ship; something like a splash in the water, nearer than the distant sound of the waves as they struck together over the wreck of the "Tigress."

Scott shuddered. Was it Paul? He groped in the darkness and grasped the little hand. It still held the orange. It was cold and trembling. Was the quartermaster coming,— coming to throw them all into the sea? If not, then he surely would before long.

"My tinkee more better you go! Good nightee! Welly sollee!"

They heard Tao-sen mutter this to himself; that was all. Everything was still as death but the water as it rose and fell under the raft. No one spoke; but the quartermaster did not come. Morning broke at last, faint and gray in the distant sky, as the sun was saying farewell to America and greeting the sunrise land.

With the first glimmer the two boys looked anxiously toward the spot where the quartermaster had been clinging. He was not there.

Possibly Tao-sen could have told them what had become of him; but Tao-sen sat silent and sullen, his head bent forward, as though he were sleeping. Even Paul knew better than to ask him.

CHAPTER VIII.

NOT FORSAKEN.

“**A** LIFE on the ocean wave!” Did the author of it ever see a fire at sea or desert a sinking wreck? Two nights and a day on a miserable raft, with just one orange for three people. What does it amount to? Nothing, perhaps. Very little, at most. If a sad fate forces you some time to try it, Heaven grant that it may be no longer that two nights and a day.

Many a story-teller has attempted to picture such an experience. But surely it was always some one who was simply drawing on a fertile imagination. No one who has floated for two nights and a day in mid-ocean, not knowing one hour from another, save by the weary, slow, and tortuous march of the sun or the merciless creeping of the stars; not knowing one hour from another, save by the increasing gnawing of imaginary hunger and the raging of feverish thirst, even in that short time; not knowing one hour from another, save by the increasing prospect of dying there, — dying of exposure, starvation, anything, but dying all alone in the wide ocean, to satisfy the birds that hover about the drifting spar; not knowing one hour from another, save by the increasing aching of the eyes, straining to catch each phantom speck upon the glaring horizon, or a false spark under the stars, and the increasing aching of the heart, as one hope after another is blotted out by that fearful verdict, “False alarm!” — no one who has suffered this reality,

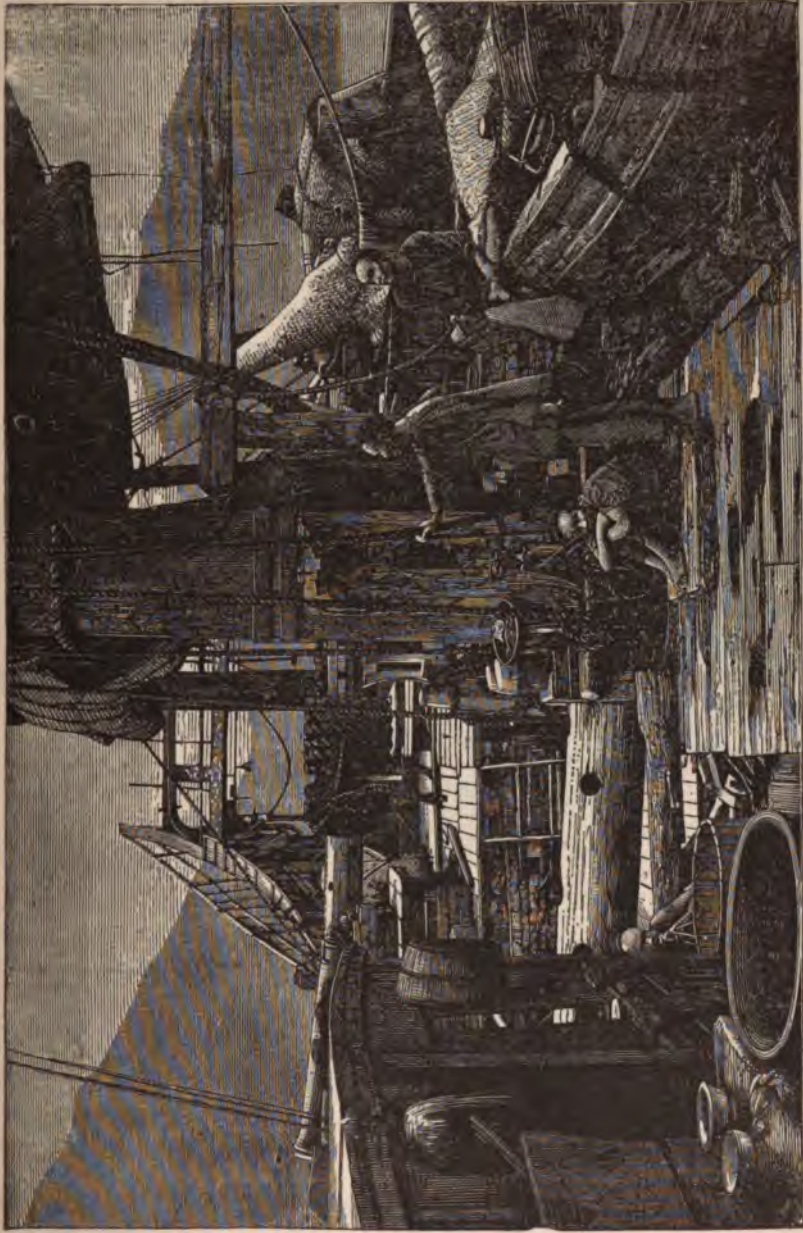
or the horrors of seeing a sail appear upon the wave-washed horizon, slowly cross the cloud-capped crescent, and disappear again into the sea and sky; no one who knows what it is to shout till his parched throat will not utter so much as a whisper, to hurl a signal of his dire distress till his hand fails him and his helpless arm drops at his side, disdainful of his will, and his dry tongue strikes mockingly against the roof of his mouth, as though both were hard, dry wood and not a part of his own flesh and blood; no one who knows what it is to float, even for two nights and a day, upon a fragment of a wreck, would or could, even in dreams, draw the picture, much less attempt, with a pen, to paint it in a way that others could understand.

But the two nights and a day passed by at last, and early the second morning a Chinese fishing junk appeared and rescued the sufferers.

So far, at last, they were safe, and Richard Raymond was correct, that He, who had so remarkably protected Our Boys in India, would not forsake them in the China Sea.

With a deep sigh Scott sank upon the deck of the junk, among the rough Chinamen, while Tao-sen told their tale of misery and begged assistance. It was natural, it was Chinese, that he should beg it; not that it was grudgingly granted, however, for of all that the rude fishermen possessed, which was very little, only rice and fish, and tea and water, they gave liberally to the three strangers.

They had no knives and forks, no spoons and plates; no sugar and milk for their tea; such things are absurdities in China. They gave a large bowl of steaming rice to each, and placed a single dish of fish, curiously prepared with spices, for the three, and Tao-sen laughed, and Scott laughed, and Paul



THE CHINESE JUNK.

laughed, and indeed all the rough sailors, standing in a circle about them, laughed, as Scott and Paul struggled with the two little chopsticks, like long, large knitting-needles, only tapering at one end, and both held in the same hand, and, following Tao-sen's deft example, tried to pick up pieces of the fish and carry the rice from the bowls into their mouths. It was



SAILOR EATING WITH CHOPSTICKS.

an absurd operation, but, being very hungry, they succeeded, after a fashion, and better and better day after day, till before long Tao-sen himself could not eat more daintily than little Hari-Paul.

And what of the rest on board the "Tigress"? That is certainly not a part of the wanderings of Our Boys in China. But at least the first report that reached Richard Raymond, in his home among the

groves and hill of Puna, near Bombay, was incorrect. The boys at least were saved. Two seamen were the first to reach Hong Kong and report the total wreck of the "Tigress," and the loss of all on board except themselves. This disaster was thus telegraphed all over the world. A little later a steamer came in, having rescued others of the passengers and crew, and again the news was telegraphed, with a full account of the wreck. It appeared as a very indifferent item, but still appeared in the daily papers of Boston and New

York. Among the rescued were the missionary and his wife, who were prudent enough not to give the names of Scott and Paul Clayton as among the lost, — when they had no means of knowing that they were lost, — and thus, under the magic power of telegraph, send a pang of bitterest sorrow to loving hearts at home, without warning, and possibly without necessity. They only telegraphed the fact to Richard Raymond. The message reached him at Calcutta, just as another royal mail steamer was leaving for Hong Kong.

Having finished their breakfast, Scott and Paul lay down on mats, spread on the deck for them, and on those rude, uncomfortable beds they were soon soundly sleeping. Tao-sen roused them many hours afterward. The sun was setting, and they were nearing a town upon the coast.

“We shall go on shore there,” he said in Hindustani to Paul, as he lifted him upon the rail, for he was too short to look over.

“We are going on shore there,” Paul repeated to Scott.

On shore! suddenly there came over Scott a strange, forlorn, forsaken feeling. On shore! What shore? The coast of China. He looked at the little town, a miserable jumble of fishing huts, under the red sunset-sky. On shore there? Why should he go on shore? Who was there to meet him? Who would be glad to see him? Then the matter grew even graver. Who was there to do anything for him, for him and for Paul? Nothing for nothing is the world's motto. He had seen enough of the world for that. It would not be different in China, and what had he to offer? Nothing. And what could he expect in return for it? Nothing. Could he hire a carriage? No, they must walk to the hotel (he did not stop to reason that there was probably no such thing as a carriage, much less a hotel, in the town they

were approaching), and when they reached the hotel could he order some supper? Could he order a room and a bed for himself and Paul? The shock of waking on the burning "Tigress," the terror of floating on the raft, were not so great as the horror that chilled his heart as he realized that he was about to go on shore! whereabouts in China he did not know; on shore without one penny, in the night, and, worst of all, with his little brother Paul; among men but half civilized, men of whom he had never heard anything good except what the missionary had told him, men of whom he had always heard tales too terrible to read without a shudder even in our own homes, safe in America.

Like a great many other people, Scott did not know China and the Chinese, and in his agony he clasped Paul's hand. Paul looked down upon him from the rail. Great, bitter tears were rolling down Scott's cheeks.

"What is the matter?" asked Paul, his large blue eyes opening wide in wonder.

"We're going on shore," sobbed Scott.

"Going on shore; of course we are, and I'm sure that's nice. I don't much like the ocean," replied Paul; and the setting sun flashed in his golden hair, while the rough sailors sat upon the deck, at a little distance, in silent wonder and possible admiration, if they were capable, for Paul's was not a common face, even in America. Many a passer along the beach at Beverly had stopped to watch the boy at play; and even the rough mountaineers on the ragged heights of the Himalaya Mountains, in India, had treated him tenderly. He was not afraid to go on shore upon the coast of China.

"But what shall we do when we get there?" Scott groaned, in helpless agony.

"I don't know," Paul replied, swinging his little feet. Then making the Hindu reverence, he added, softly. "But I guess God knows, and if he does, it'll be all right."

The sailors gathered about them again to tell them that supper was ready. Paul was both hungry and anxious to try the chopsticks again, and Scott, shamed a little, but with a heavy heart, followed his brother.

"What are they going to do with us?" Scott asked Tao-sen, while they were eating; but the Chinese servant was as ignorant as he. Only by signs and a very few words that they possessed in common could he talk with his own countrymen, for Tao-sen came from the North.

Then, for the first time, Scott thought of the precious package, hidden under the trunk on the "Tigress," now at the bottom of the China Sea. He sprang to his feet. "O Paul!" he exclaimed, "that package! that package!"

For a moment Paul started, too, then, suddenly recalling the new hiding-place, he pulled back his jacket, over his chest, to disclose the outline, and replied, "I've got it, Scott; it's all safe here."

"Good for you, Paul!" Scott shouted; and a moment later he added, "Paul, I believe you'd better keep it; you are safer than I am. You shall give it to papa if ever we get home, and I'll tell him how you saved it."

Paul dropped his chopsticks, to clap his hands in glee; and with this happy ray of sunlight brightening the twilight about them, they entered the port to go on shore.

Canton was quite another matter. They had all heard of Canton, and all at once every one began to explain the exact location of this patriarch among Chinese cities, which was old when Rome was founded, and one of the greatest marine cities of China five hundred years before the wise men of the East followed the Star of Bethlehem westward; a port which was opened to foreign trade nearly twelve hundred years ago, and closed again when the Chinese found what treacherous people came to trade with them from the Western world; the great city which the terrible Manchous fought for eleven months to conquer when they swept over China and established their dynasty, and which then was only reduced by treachery and a cost of seven hundred thousand lives. Of course they all knew about Canton, but all they succeeded in telling about it was the fact that it was far away toward the rising sun, across the hills and down the canals, at the mouth of the great Si River.

Scott knew very well that Canton was near Hong Kong, and having found at least this ground to stand upon, he said, decidedly, "Paul, we must go to Canton."

"Yes, yes," replied every sailor, nodding approvingly; "you must go to Canton; of course you must go to Canton."

Then they left him to make the junk fast, and Scott and Paul looked along the deserted wharf, and Scott wondered how in the world they were ever to get themselves to Canton, and indeed what in the world they were to do with themselves even within the next ten minutes.

There were other junks about them, large and small, and flat-boats and sampans almost without number. It was a weird sight, to make a stronger heart than Scott's grow faint, even though he had no priceless, golden-haired charge to protect, and even though his belt were filled with coin. It was natural that

Paul, though younger, should feel little or none of this fear, for such sights in the main were not new to him, and the want of hospitality or the worth of gold he had never realized. Had he not made more than one journey under the bright stars and on the sinewy shoulder of Dhondaram, among scenes far more frightful than this comparatively quiet picture before him? Had he not witnessed the funeral fires upon the burning ghats of Benares, while the moon shone on the fantastic throngs howling about them? Had he not seen a mad elephant, and passed almost between the yawning jaws of hungry crocodiles on the sacred Ganges at midnight? Had he not watched the Brahmins and Munis at their hideous devotions before the sky was gray with dawning, and risen to follow the caravan into the giant mountains of India while the morning star was bright? To be sure, he missed the strong arm of Dhondaram and the indomitable will and never-failing calmness and courage which had made everything seem easy; but unwittingly he had himself absorbed much of the Muni's disposition, and even now, while he clasped Scott's hand for protection, he was in reality sending strength and courage to his brother's fainting heart.

Just below the prow, as the junk was made fast, there lay a flat-boat, evidently constructed for canal use. The square trap-door that covered the hold was open. A faint red light was burning there, and in its rays the boys could distinctly see an old Chinese woman, bending over a curious stove, another feeding a little baby, and two or three naked children lying on the floor.

"What a place," Scott said to Paul. "That is one of the homes they told us about, where the people live all the time in their miserable boats."

"Poor little boy, I'm sorry for you," said Paul, looking

down. Scott shuddered again as he thought that Paul, at that moment, was even worse off than the naked and dirty little fellow down in the hold of the flat-boat.



UP TO THE WHARVES.

There were very few moving about the littered landing as the junk approached; and one could not wonder, for surely it could not have been a tempting spot, even to a Chinaman.

But the sailor who seemed to be captain of the junk said something to a man in a sampan down below, and the man in the sampan repeated it to a man on a flat-boat, and the man on the flat-boat repeated it to a man on the wharf, and the man on the wharf shouted it to others farther up the street, and they in turn sent the message, quicker than a district messenger could have carried it in America, up one street and down another, till in less time than one must take to tell of it, the words which the captain spoke had been carried to the very limits of every lane in Wucheun.

And what was this message that thus sped throughout Wucheun? What, indeed, could it have been, but the most wonderful message that was ever heard in those narrow streets; the strangest story ever told by the gossiping tongues of Wucheun; the astounding fact, that to this out-of-the-way corner of the great Middle Kingdom, to this little dot upon the shores of the vast Celestial Empire, whose streets were perhaps never trod by the foot of a white man, to Wucheun had come two smooth-faced people from the Western seas, two lads from the land of the red-haired Western devils, found floating on bits of wood, alone in the China Sea? Was this not enough to shake Wucheun to the very foundations of its mud and bamboo huts, and to rouse its citizens, till the men forgot their national lethargy, which keeps them sitting when it is not absolutely necessary for them to stand; and the women forgot their national modesty, which keeps them out of sight when it is not absolutely necessary for them to show themselves; and the children forgot their national propensities, which cause them to sleep, anywhere and at all times; and even the dogs forgot their nightly work of patrolling about the garbage heaps; and even the pigs forgot to lie still in the

gutters; and even the ducks forgot that they had gone to roost on the shores of some mud-hole right in the middle of the street, till men and women, children and dogs, pigs and ducks, struck up such a bedlam as had not been heard, before, in quiet Wucheun since the days of the Manchou wars and terrible Tai-ping rebellion?

But before all this happened, Scott and Paul and Tao-sen prepared to go on shore, and as they had no worldly goods but the clothes they wore, the preparation did not require much time. They were prevented from carrying out the plan, however, by the sailors of the junk, who succeeded in making plain to Tao-sen that they had better stay on board till the great officials of the little town, in all their sublime and honorable dignity, and buttons and sashes, should come down and decide what disposal to make of them.

It was very fortunate that this advice was given and accepted, for the great Bourdon bell, hanging in the tower of the Cathedral Notre Dame, never sent a clarion message to every ear in Paris to which there was such quick and vehement response as to that which the captain of the junk had just sent flying through Wucheun. Soon the multitude came surging down.

But how did it come? With noise enough, to be sure; the clatter and hubbub began at once and grew louder and louder, till Scott shook to the very toes of his boots. He had been too sea-sick even to think of taking off his boots that last night on the "Tigress," and now he was very glad of it. But they could see the crowd coming, as well as hear it.

The streets of China are never lighted at night, and to prevent robbers and murderers from prowling about, and a jumble and disturbance generally in those narrow streets, every

one who leaves his own door, after dark, throughout the length and breadth of China, is obliged, by law, to carry a lantern.



EVERY ONE RUNNING.

And what kind of lanterns did they carry? Why, Chinese lanterns, of course. What else could they carry in China? Did you think that Chinese lanterns were only the invention of some fertile American brain, to make new method of cele-

brating the Fourth of July? No; from Malacca to the Great Wall, from the ocean to Siberia and Thibet, all night and every night, China is one vast display of paper lanterns. Down the streets there came large lanterns and little lanterns, swinging to and fro and bumping into each other, and the greater the man the larger the lantern beneath, or, rather, behind which



CHINESE LANTERNS.

he walked; for when one is very great, or very rich, he always has a servant carry the lantern for him. He sometimes carries it in his hand, but usually upon a pole, and whoever carried his lantern in his hand that night had it crushed to atoms in the crowd and was obliged to go home in the dark.

There were plain white lanterns, with a name, like one spangled and fancifully decorated letter, painted in black upon them. That was the name of the owner; and there were letters all gaudily decorated in bright colors; and all the colors meant something. And on and on they came. They reached the wharf; they clambered up on to the deck of the junk, and the more that came the more there seemed behind them, still coming. And if Scott and Paul could have understood the gabble of the crowd beneath the lanterns, they would have heard the most fabulous and wonderful stories told about them; for America is not the only place where a wonderful tale will grow more wonderful the oftener it is told. They would have heard that these two strangers were spirits, flown from the unknown North, in the fierce gale that had just passed over

Wucheun, as well as over the "Tigress." They would have heard that these two wonders, with white skins and such remarkable costumes, were prodigies from another world, thrown out of the deep blue sea by the great dragon, and that all the late commotion in the ocean waves was caused by that dragon coming to the surface to bring them up. They would



CHINESE LANTERNS.

have heard that these two pale creatures, with long hair all over their heads, and hair that was not even black, had come out of the sky, like a rainbow, closing the terrible gale that but three days before had frightened the honorable citizens of Wucheun to their wits' ends, lest it were a visitation of the dragon, intent upon swallowing them up, and many more and even more wonderful stories they would have heard, not one of them told with any intent to injure them; not a word of evil council against them. But as they could not understand a word of it, and as it was all shouted by every one at once, and

at the top of his lungs, and as their rough faces, with slant-eyes and shaven foreheads, looked wild and fierce in the uncertain glare of the many-colored lanterns, and as they crowded about him, felt of his clothes, touched his cheeks, and then looked at their fingers to see if the white came off, and pulled his hair to see if that would come off, and as Tao-sen could understand almost as little as he, and render him no possible assistance, it seemed to Scott, at last, as if this wild and howling mob were a mass of frantic cannibals, and even then he almost felt him being eaten up, while the disagreeable odors exhaled from the heated mass about him were anything but refreshing.

Scott had taken the wise precaution, at the very outset, to place Paul on the head of a curious cask, in which the sailors carried water, so that he stood with his feet as high as the heads of the visitors, and Scott stood as high as possible on a block beside him, with one hand resting upon Paul's foot, ready to sell his life dearly enough if any one dared attack Paul first, but feeling with all his heart their utter helplessness.

The position he had chosen for Paul was most fortunate, for instinctively one feels a sensation of respect for anything to which he must look up. They could not reach him, except to touch his feet, and in the light of the lanterns, shining most brightly about his head, the effect was strange and fascinating, even to those rough fishermen. A bright halo seemed to surround the golden hair and pale forehead and large blue eyes. Rougher men than these had surrounded him in the Himalaya Mountains and touched him and examined him from head to foot, but not one of them had ever offered to injure him in any way. They had always treated him kindly. He laughed and shouted ; Scott could not stop him.

"Look at that lantern, Scott! Is n't it pretty?" he cried, pointing to one with brilliant colors. "Get away!" he shouted to a native below, who had thrust his lantern almost against his face; and because he did not understand, and did not move it quickly enough, Paul struck the lantern with his little fist and made a hole in it. "Look at that!" he said, triumphantly. "That's the way I'll smash the whole of 'em if you burn my nose!"

"Don't, don't!" pleaded Scott in a faint voice.

"It's fun!" said Paul. "See how they keep their pretty lanterns away from me now. They don't want to get 'em cracked, I guess. Stop that or I'll kick!" he cried again, lifting his foot with his words as one of the more officious began picking at his shoe, with his long nails, in a way that was evidently intended to tear off a piece as a memento. The man understood the gesture better than he did the words, and quickly drew back.

"Don't! don't, Paul, don't!" said Scott again, earnestly, pressing his hand more firmly on Paul's foot.

"Wish Dhondaram was here!" Paul replied, reproachfully. "He'd stop their picking my shoe to pieces." Then, as the excitement grew, he exclaimed again, "It's just like being Tom Thumb when we saw him in Boston."

And in spite of his anxiety Scott could not but recall the way in which he and other boys had crowded about the little general, and how he thought it very unkind in him when he said, "Please don't touch me," and said it a little pettishly, just because Scott attempted to feel of his tiny hand, to realize that it was actual flesh and blood. Yes, it was quite like being Tom Thumb, only it was n't in Boston.

What might have happened, in time, no one knows, for the

crowd was becoming more dense and more bold and more impudently inquisitive, when a new cry was heard upon the shore, and repeated on the junk, and right and left the people began to retreat, precipitately, any way and every way, over the sides of



A MANDARIN'S CARRIAGE.

the junk into the rigging, some into the water even, as a lantern, much larger than the rest, with many bright colors and a fierce dragon on it, came swinging up the side of the junk and on to the deck, with a dozen or more smaller lanterns just like it, and under them appeared a band of men all dressed alike, and holding long whips of some sort in their hands, which they used with a vengeance, right and left, on any one and every one. No wonder the crowd scattered. It was the mandarin,

prefect of Wucheun, the chief dignitary of the town, who held their lives, property, and everything else in the hollow of his fat hand, and would hold them so long as he did not gain their ill-will and force them to demand another prefect from the governor of the province. He would never gain their ill-will by whipping them out of his august way, that is very certain, for every crack of a rattan which they received served to make them respect him so much the more.

The laws of China are a little different from the laws of other nations. Whenever there is a great fire or a grand public disturbance, it is the duty of the mandarin to be there in person and take the matter in hand. He does not possess the comfortable privilege of sitting at ease in his gubernatorial chair, reading a newspaper, puffing a cigar, and wondering why the stupid police do not do their duty more bravely. Thus the prefect of Wucheun, and a very good mandarin in his way, came down to the junk, with all his portly body, and all his long, very long queue, and his little cap with a royal button, and all his bright and glistening robes, and all his broad girdle, and all his official police to whip the dirty crowd away from his fine clothes. He was a literary graduate with high honors from the Imperial College of Peking. He had been in Shanghai, Canton, Hong Kong. He had often seen devils from the West. He even knew that Americans were not Englishmen and that Englishmen were not Americans; withal, he was kind-hearted, too kind-hearted, or he would have been the governor of a province by this time, perhaps, or at least prefect of a much more important place than the somewhat obscure city of Wucheun, and best of all he spoke the language of the North, the language to which Taosen was born and bred. At last they could find out something.

Tao-sen told the story, colored somewhat, of course. It must have been revised and enlarged upon the original, from the mere fact that a Chinaman told it, but the fat mandarin understood it all, and took in the situation without delay.

"And what do you want me to do with you, my little younger brother?" he asked, cordially taking Scott's hand in his.

"I want to go to Canton, to Hong Kong!" Scott replied, through Tao-sen.

"Of course! of course!" replied the prefect. "You want to go to Canton, to Hong Kong, and of course you shall go to Hong Kong. But first you want to go to supper and to go to bed. To-morrow, to-morrow will be quite time enough to think of going to Canton, to Hong Kong, and where to go to supper and how to go to bed in our poor, miserable town, for two honorable and most magnificent guests from the great and noble country over the ocean, that is the mystery." And he stroked his smooth forehead with his sleek, fat hand.

He would have spoken of the town in precisely the same way had it been imperial Peking, and to the strangers in the same way had they been refugees from the South Seas, if it had pleased him to accept them as his guests, for that is Chinese etiquette. It is written in the great "Book of Rites." Doubtless in this case the prefect meant a little more than mere politeness; but whether he means it or not, if the Chinese mandarin is polite at all, he is all politeness, with a politeness which would shame even a Parisian.

"Anything will do. We're not very particular," Scott replied, feeling that he could kiss the hand that offered him even a friendly shed to shelter little Paul; and Tao-sen translated it, not literally, perhaps, but in a way that would be con-

formable with the "Rites," for Tao-sen was not a coolie, he was not utterly ignorant, and at the same time he endeavored to convey a vague impression that the two strangers *were*, indeed, *very* particular, — for he knew China and the Chinese far better than Scott knew them, — and on his own authority he graciously informed the mandarin, and did it very emphatically, that these Americans were fabulously rich, that they had relatives of untold wealth who would reward with nuggets of gold any one who aided them out of this trouble.

In the main Tao-sen was quite correct and wise in the course he pursued, and doubtless it acted as a strong argument in securing safety and luxury, but in the end, in all its intricate workings, which he, poor fellow, could not, of course, foresee, it did a deal of mischief, too.

Now, other mandarins, lawyers, officers, and men without anything but the name, patiently waiting for something to turn up, who had been taking their turns in inspecting Scott and Paul, gathered about the prefect in council.

"Send them to the inn," said one.

"What inn?" asked another.

"The Inn of Celestial Happiness," the first replied.

Celestial Happiness is such a name for a hotel that one might expect a mansion of marble and gold, with food such as mortals rarely eat, served by spirits, in a most wonderful way, but the prefect was quite correct when he replied with scorn, "A home for dogs!" and, indeed, had Scott and Paul gone to that Inn of Celestial Happiness they would have found nothing but dogs and filth and such things as always go with them.

"The pagoda!" some one suggested, and all together they responded, "The pagoda." And the prefect gave orders to a servant to have chambers at once fitted up at the pagoda,

appropriate for the strangers, to have his own palanquin carry them there, to have such a supper served for them as he would wish to give to honored guests from far away, to have a guard of imperial police go with them and stay with them, and, in fact, to furnish them with anything and everything which Wucheun afforded.

Scarcely able to contain himself, Tao-sen reported the success of his maiden diplomacy. Scott was overwhelmed.

"Thank you, sir," he exclaimed, in English, of course, grasping the prefect's hand.

Paul alone seemed to consider it quite a matter of course.

"That's all right. Let's go," he said, quietly, and began to clamber down from the cask; and to tell the truth, his little feet were decidedly tired of standing there so long.

But it was more of a task to "go" than they supposed. Tao-sen took Paul in his arms, but no sooner did the surrounding throng, which for the time had remained comparatively quiet, see that something was being done on board the junk, than it at once set up a clamorous demand to have an opportunity to see the two wonders with long hair and white skins, and for a time it was almost impossible for the guards to keep it back, much more force a passage through it to the palanquin.

At last the prefect shouted, "To the pagoda; the noble guests are going to the pagoda, to stay a month!"

This had the desired effect, and all repeating, "To the pagoda!" turned in that direction.

The bearers of the prefect's palanquin had very little work before them, for no sooner were the two boys safely in the little carriage, the doors of which the prefect drew together, showing them how to lock them on the inside, than the excited throng

shouldered the palanquin, struggling for an opportunity so much as to lay a hand upon it, and at a rapid pace they



EVERY ONE ON THE LOOKOUT.

hurried it down the broadest street, toward the pagoda. Very soon, however, the pace slackened, and from the noise without it was evident that the crowd was too dense to pass. Once, while they were standing still, Scott ventured to unlock the

door and open it a crack and peep out, when a dozen hands were suddenly stretched out and eager fingers filled the crack. Scott closed the door quickly enough, pinching some of the fingers smartly, and with a trembling hand he locked it again.

"Guess I'd better let that stay shut," Scott said to Paul. Paul did not answer, and in the very dim light stealing through the blinds, forming the top of the door, Scott saw that Paul was fast asleep.



A NOVEL COACH.

CHAPTER X.

AT HOME IN A CHINESE PAGODA

PAUL slept soundly for more than an hour, with his head on Scott's shoulder. Then Scott felt them setting down the palanquin, and heard a rap on the outside, and Tao-sen's voice calling, "All litee; opee door."

Paul was confused for a moment as Scott shook him and whispered, "Wake up, Paul; wake up, we are here!"

"Where?" he asked, rubbing his eyes. Was it India, the 'Tigress,' or China? He had been wandering, in dreamland, up and down the pretty beach at Beverly.

Lanterns, pigtailed, bad odors, and a dense and noisy throng greeted them again the moment they appeared, but they felt the security of friendship, enforced by the rattans of the imperial police, and made their way up the flights of steps before them, under the broad gate, and into a court with a pavilion on one side, from which chambers opened, small rooms, but clean and fitted up with some degree of elegance, which had been prepared for the strangers. But the stairs and court and pavilion, and even the chambers, were already filled with an eager throng.

If it has occurred to any one to wonder why the prefect did not take the boys to his own house, they need but glance for a moment at this vast concourse, including every one, rich and poor, high and low, which he knew would be inevitable, to obtain a most satisfactory excuse, for one does not close his

doors in China. He cannot close his doors. When curiosity calls, the people will investigate. They would think it very strange to find a door closed against them when they sought to enter. Nay, they would be more than surprised, they would enter, door or no door, and the more firmly the door was closed the more sure they would be to open it. Not in anger, but in a curious sentiment of perseverance and determination, for as soon as they had succeeded in opening the door, tearing it down, smashing it in, anything to put it out of their way, they would advance most peaceably to the object of their search, investigate to their heart's content, rudely, perhaps, measured by our ideas, but with no unkind intent, and then go their way again, apologizing for the damage they had done.

This is very strange, but it is very true. The writer speaks from personal experience. Then, too, it is quite probable that the home of the prefect was humble, if not mean, compared with the pagoda. How could it have been otherwise and been in Wucheun?

But a pagoda! A pagoda is a church! Yes, a pagoda is a church, or at least it is a part of a Buddhist church. But a temple, or church, or pagoda, in China, is something that exacts as little real reverence from the people as almost anything in the empire. The pagoda proper is a high tower grotesquely ornamented with dragons and elephants and figures without number, which even their makers could not explain, but about it there must be the various courts of the temple and buildings of the convent, and places for worship, and cells of the priests, and often rooms for noted guests, and always a theatrical stage, somewhere. A theatre! Exactly. For the theatre, that in India is thought the abomination of all abominable things, is, in China, one of the most popular forms of worship. But



GARDEN OF THE PAGODA

doubtless the boys will see more of that before they are safely out of China.

Many of these towns are very ancient, older than Buddhism even, and the temples are profusely supplied with idols. The pagoda is always a little beyond the crowded city, and often surrounded with beautiful groves and gardens, and when it stands in a favorable location it often becomes a great and fashionable summer resort, where wealthy families hire apartments and spend long months in the delightful surroundings. Such temples are almost palatial in their magnificence, but of course the poor little pagoda of poor little Wucheun boasted nothing of this sort. The rooms were comfortable, however, and if everything was not as neat and clean as possible, to say the least it was only *tolerably* dirty. People make long pilgrimages to these shrines, and roads and canals lead away from them in every direction. As the old saying in Italy was that all roads lead to Rome, so in China one might well say that every path terminates at a pagoda.

The air about this pagoda of Wucheun was heavy with the fragrance of azaleas, a most delightful relief from the musk and must that were everywhere, and still prominent, though somewhat subdued.

In some of these monasteries there are closed cells, all sealed and cemented, with only a very narrow window. Inside is a priest who has taken upon himself a vow of solitude. His food is passed through the little window morning and night. One may be very devout who thus imprisons himself, or possibly he may not be devout at all, for no sooner does he go into this dungeon than pilgrims flock to the little window for his blessing, and sometimes large sums of money are passed through the opening in a single day.

This temple of Wucheun boasted no such attractions. But it was no mean temple, after all. There were gardens and courts planted with lofty trees and airy terraces, which contrasted strikingly with the meagre and crowded city at the foot of the hill upon which the pagoda stood. In the centre, facing



CURIOUS GATES IN THE GARDEN WALL.

the pavilion, set apart for the strangers, stood the real temple. Then on either side of the pavilion were broad saloons. These were intended for literary gatherings, but few ever gathered there, except to discuss such an important topic, for instance, as the removal of their prefect.

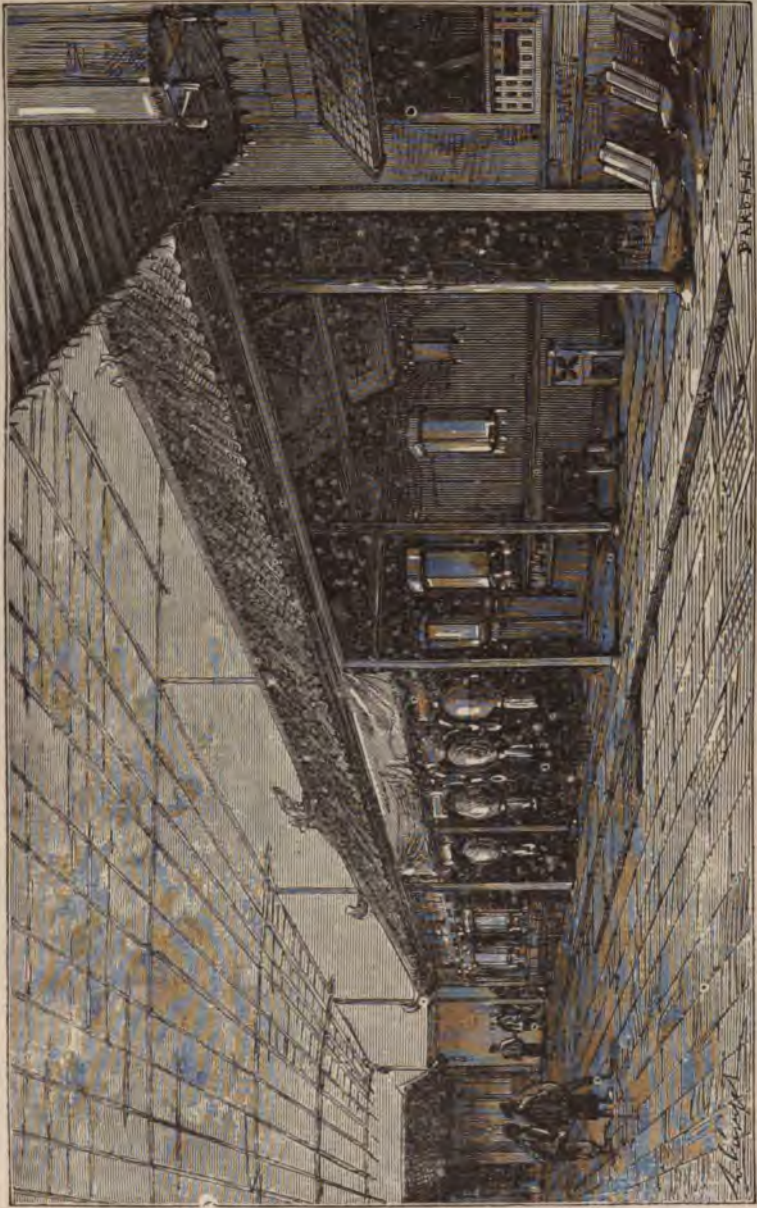
Then there were other buildings, of different shapes and for different purposes, on either side, and long flights of steps leading to all of them. But to describe this building where Scott and Paul found shelter would be just as impossible as to

describe a Chinaman to one who had never seen such a thing in his life. It was thoroughly Chinese, but one must have been in China to know what that means.



THE OLD SCHOOLMASTER.

In the pavilion the boys were met by an old man with a wrinkled face and white mustache, and eyes that were like saucers, only elongated at the outer corners, behind thick,



THE PAVILION

P. 1874

round glasses, set in huge wooden frames, and fastened upon his little nose with long cords of green, which were tied under his queue behind. He announced himself as a literary graduate, schoolmaster of Wucheun, who had been deputed to attend to the strangers, because he could speak the North China dialect and make himself understood to their servant.

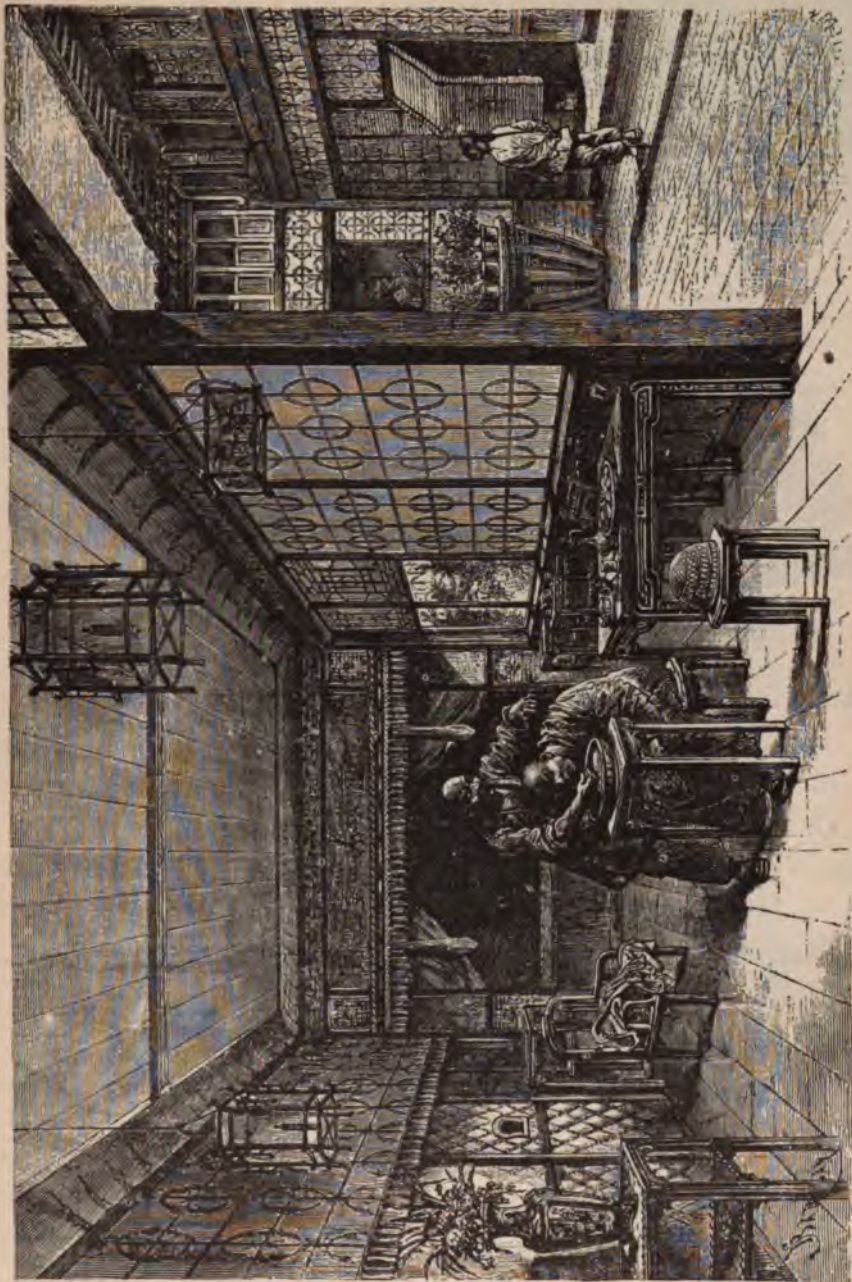
Thus it transpired that Tao-sen became installed as the boys' servant, a position he accepted with most genuine pride, and held more or less satisfactorily so long as a private servant was a possibility.

The schoolmaster invited them to be seated before a low table in the pavilion. The guards formed a little circle about it. The schoolmaster seated himself on the opposite side. Tao-sen stood behind them, and the crowd, not so noisy and impertinent now, walked this way and that, about them, making remarks which were not very polite, perhaps, but that could not be understood, so it did not matter, and only now and then reaching over the back of the low chairs to touch Paul's hair.

Servants came in with a bowl of boiling hot water, in which they dipped a napkin, dexterously wrung it out, and passed it to Scott. He was about to reply, "No, thank you," not knowing just what was intended, when Paul, who remembered precisely the same custom on the Thibetan slopes of the Himalayas, took the napkin, and, shaking it a moment to let it cool a little, carefully bathed his face and hands.

"That's not so bad," said Scott, now taking the napkin, fresh again from the hot water. "Lucky you were here, Paul. I thought they were going to try hot water on me to see if that would start the white. If I had dared to I should have thrown it in their faces."

Then tea was brought in, and as they had had an intro-



INTERIOR OF A CHINESE SLEEPING-ROOM.

duction to this mystery on board the junk, they were able to perform the ceremony to the full satisfaction of the interested crowd of spectators.

First cups were passed to them with a few dry leaves in the bottom, and another empty cup, a little smaller, to fit into the larger one upside down, when a servant should have filled it with hot water. The rim of the larger cup, extending a little beyond that of the smaller, gives a narrow space to cover with the lips, and thus they drank their tea.



TEACUPS.

Paul's little hands were too small to hold the cups according to the "Rites," and the venerable schoolmaster, bending forward, assisted him.

The Chinese have a proverb that "He who is friendly never lacks a friend." No wonder Paul was not afraid to go on shore in China.

Then the supper was brought in. Not all at once, but first an array of sweetmeats, curious candies, sugar-coated cakes, the soft, white ends of rhubarb stems in a thick coating of sugar, nuts, all carefully picked from the shells, and watermelon seeds, among the rest. Scott was disappointed, for he was very hungry, and it looked very much as though this was only a delicate lunch just before bedtime.

Paul laughed at the schoolmaster as he munched upon the melon seeds, and tried to break the shell and follow

his example, but his little finger-nails were not long enough, and the schoolmaster laughed in his turn, and, taking the



A MANDARIN'S GUESTS.

hint, the crowd about them began to howl, which gave the guards an excuse for exercising their whips again, and they did it with a will. But the sedate schoolmaster carefully opened some seeds for Paul, dexterously pushing the

point of one of his long nails into the soft end and prying the two sides apart without the least difficulty.

But Scott was mistaken about the amount of lunch prepared. The sweetmeats were followed by fruit and melons, and then came the inevitable bowls of rice, one bowl for each, and a plate of fish, another of meat of some kind, curiously prepared and already cut up in small pieces, and another of herbs dried in salt. Dexterously the schoolmaster carried bits of meat to his mouth with the chopsticks, and then holding the bowl of rice to his lips he easily managed that; while the boys, as neatly as possible, which was badly enough at the best, followed his example, and the guards had all they could do to prevent a terrific uproar.

Then, appropriately enough, this generous meal, that began with dessert, ended with soup or something very like it, which they drank from little bowls, as there were no such things as spoons.

A little pile of thin silk tissue paper had been placed beside each place. Scott wondered what it was for, till he watched the schoolmaster take a piece from his pile, use it as a napkin, and give it to the servant beside him.

The supper ended, and all the time the schoolmaster had been doing his best to politely entertain the prefect's guests with all sorts of questions. He certainly thought they were polite, and his manner was so civil that Scott could not resent them, though more than once he was tempted to consider him almost as impertinently inquisitive as the crowd about them.

The schoolmaster asked all about the country far away, where their own people lived. He asked about their fathers and mothers, though Scott had assured him that they were

brothers. He asked how old they were, if they could read and write, the time of the year when they were born, and if they were married, and seemed surprised and incredulous when Scott reiterated the fact that, so far as he knew, their parents had made no provision, as yet, to secure them desirable wives.

But so soon as supper was over and the table carried away, and their chairs set back against the wall, which was covered with curious paper of bright colors, with goblins and dragons all over it, they had a cessation of this kind of politeness and a renewal of that which had greeted them before, for the crowd at once became clamorous and demanded an opportunity to see the strangers and speak to them, and satisfy themselves as to what they were made of.

They were not so rude as before, for the guard drove back the more disagreeable, and there were no lanterns, for hanging lamps above their heads filled the pavilion with a soft, red glow.

Till long after midnight the schoolmaster sat beside them answering all sorts of questions, and in a way that would have astonished Scott as the most fabulous lies, but at least in a way to quiet the excitement. Then, only half satisfied, the crowd began, reluctantly, to withdraw. The prefect's secretary presented himself to ask if everything was properly attended to; and had Tao-sen translated precisely what Scott told him, the prefect would have discovered that he was doing decidedly more than was at all necessary, and consequently have done decidedly less in the future. Tao-sen had sharpened his wits in foreign lands, and now proved an adept in applying Chinese rites and philosophy to his own practical advantage and that of his friends.

Then the great gates below were closed, and sliding doors, that folded in upon each other like a long screen, were drawn in front of the pavilion, shutting out the open view below and making a large chamber, instead of open balcony of the place. The screen or wall was made of thick oiled paper fastened to wooden frames, and ornamented like the walls behind them, and the boys were conducted into one of the apartments at the side, where two mattresses were laid upon low frames, with blankets and pillows, but without sheets. On top of each bed there lay a curious contrivance, like a barrel, only smaller and longer, very light indeed, made of woven bamboo. When the schoolmaster had left them and all but one of the hanging lamps in the pavilion were extinguished, Scott took this bamboo frame in his hands, and laughing, struck Tao-sen over the back with it.

"Look here, Ling," he cried, "what's this thing for?" And Tao-sen, deliberately stretching himself on the floor, as if to sleep, placed the bamboo across him, hung his hands over it, and shut his eyes.

"Great Cæsar's ghost!" Scott exclaimed. "Let me see if I can come that." And Paul's merry laugh rang in the old Buddhist temple as he watched his brother.

A clatter, like the beating of a broken drum, sounded just outside the pavilion, and a shrill cry followed.

"What's the matter?" Scott asked, starting to his feet.

"It's the watchman," replied Tao-sen.

"What does he make that noise for?" asked Paul.

"To show the thieves that he is there."

"So that they'll go somewhere else, I suppose," observed Scott.

"Yes," said Tao-sen, as solemnly, for he did not see the

joke, and indeed that was precisely why the watchman made the noise.

"But what did he say," asked Paul. And Tao-sen, again venturing upon his pigeon-English, replied, —

"Look outee fire top-side. Look outee fire down b'low."

"What, is there a fire?" Scott cried, picking up his boot which he had just taken off.

"No fire! no, no," Tao-sen replied. "He just now talkee, look outee fire."

"And does he keep that up all night?"

"Yes, yes," said Tao-sen.

Scott shrugged his shoulders, but when he remembered how much better off they were than they might have been, how immeasurably worse off he had feared they might be, only a few hours before, he added, "I tell you, Paul, this is not so bad."

Paul was almost asleep on the little bed opposite, with Tao-sen lying on the floor beside it, but he opened his blue eyes long enough to reply, —

"Course it's nice, Scott; God did it."

Then the heavy lids dropped again in happy confidence, happy whether modern theorists would bear him out or not, and they did not open again till morning.

CHAPTER XI.

LIFE AT WUCHEUN.

SCOTT thought that he had hardly closed his eyes when he opened them again to find Paul pulling at his hand and laughing, as, imitating Tao-sen, he was repeating, —
“Chow-chow all lightee, chop-chop, you Mellican man.”
Then coming to the end of his Chinese rope, he caught the old American coil again and continued, “Wake up, Scott, breakfast’s ready and I’m awful hungry.”

“Scott was up in a moment, and Paul initiated him in what Tao-sen had already taught him of the very meagre appliances for bathing.

“Don’t wonder these fellows are dirty, if this little arrangement is the only way they have of keeping clean,” he muttered.

“Ling says we’ve got to go to the barber’s to have our hair combed,” laughed Paul. “And then he says the barbers, too, won’t comb it, they’ll only shave our heads all round like his and braid a little pigtail on behind. Wouldn’t I look jolly in a pigtail, Scott?” He gathered up his golden hair behind, and tried to look at himself in a polished piece of metal that served for a mirror. “And, oh, Scott, Tao-sen’s had a shave this very morning, and his head’s just as yellow and shiny, and it’s smooth as gran’pa’s, every bit. There he comes now, look at him.— Pull off your hat, boy!” he said, sternly, striking the attitude

and imitating the voice of the chief steward of the "Tigress" whenever he spoke to Ling.

Tao-sen understood very well, and, jumping as he used to on the "Tigress," as though frightened out of his wits, he snatched the little skull-cap from his freshly shaven pate.

"And a new cap and new shoes, too. For mercy's sake where'd you get 'em, Ling?" Scott exclaimed, looking admiringly at the remodelled Tao-sen.

"My catchee pleasant, plenty pleasant," said Tao-sen, grinning from ear to ear.

"What! presents! Who gave them to you?"

"Plenty, plenty, alee same evlybody. Just now Mellican man come chow-chow, catchee plenty, plenty pleasant."

"Presents for us, too, eh? Guess we'll go to chow-chow just as chop-chop as possible, Mr. Ling. Where's the dining-hall?"

Paul, who was less demonstrative, was no less pleased at the idea of receiving presents than his brother.

They hurried out into the pavilion, where, to their horror, they found, not the fat prefect alone, but a score of others



THE BARBER.

in fine clothes, and a long table set, with as many places. They had evidently all come to breakfast.

Then came the introductions after the prefect had inquired if the miserable quarters his poor town afforded had sufficed to supply the needs of his honorable guests, and the introduction was worse than using chopsticks, Scott thought. They bowed and shuffled about, and nodded and said a great deal that Tao-sen could not begin to translate, till in despair Scott fell back on the good old American custom of offering his right hand to each. They seemed to comprehend the difficulty and smiled, and a few frowned a little, as they accepted his system, and no doubt they all pitied him, so ignorant of all the rites and of all true etiquette.

Then they all presented the gifts they had brought to eat and drink and wear, and ornaments of silver and ivory and tortoise-shell and sandal-wood, and little cases of musk. Under any other circumstances they would all have expected gifts of equal value in return, but this time, at least, they must surely have the credit of acts of real and genuine courtesy and generosity. Then began a series of antics which Scott thought as comical as a Humpty-Dumpty performance, but, in reality, these representative men of Wucheun were only going through the regular routine of seating themselves at the table. First, the prefect, who of course was host, offered the seat at the head of the table, the best seat, to the guest who was highest in rank, and he brushed off the imaginary dust with his fine robe. But, bowing and bobbing, the man refused, and, in his turn brushing off the imaginary dust, he declared the prefect should sit there, and they both bobbed and bowed again, all as solemnly as though performing some temple service, till the prefect declared that instead of the head of the table this should be the foot,

the lowest seat of all, and there he seated himself, quite in accordance with the rites. Then all together the guests began bobbing and bowing, and rubbing off dust where, for a wonder, there was no dust, all for each other, all struggling for the lowest seat, till Scott and Paul, who, as guests, were placed beside the prefect, could scarcely keep from bursting into laughter, which would of course have been the rudest thing in the world to do, for these men, who knew the rites by heart, if that be possible, were only performing parts of real politeness.

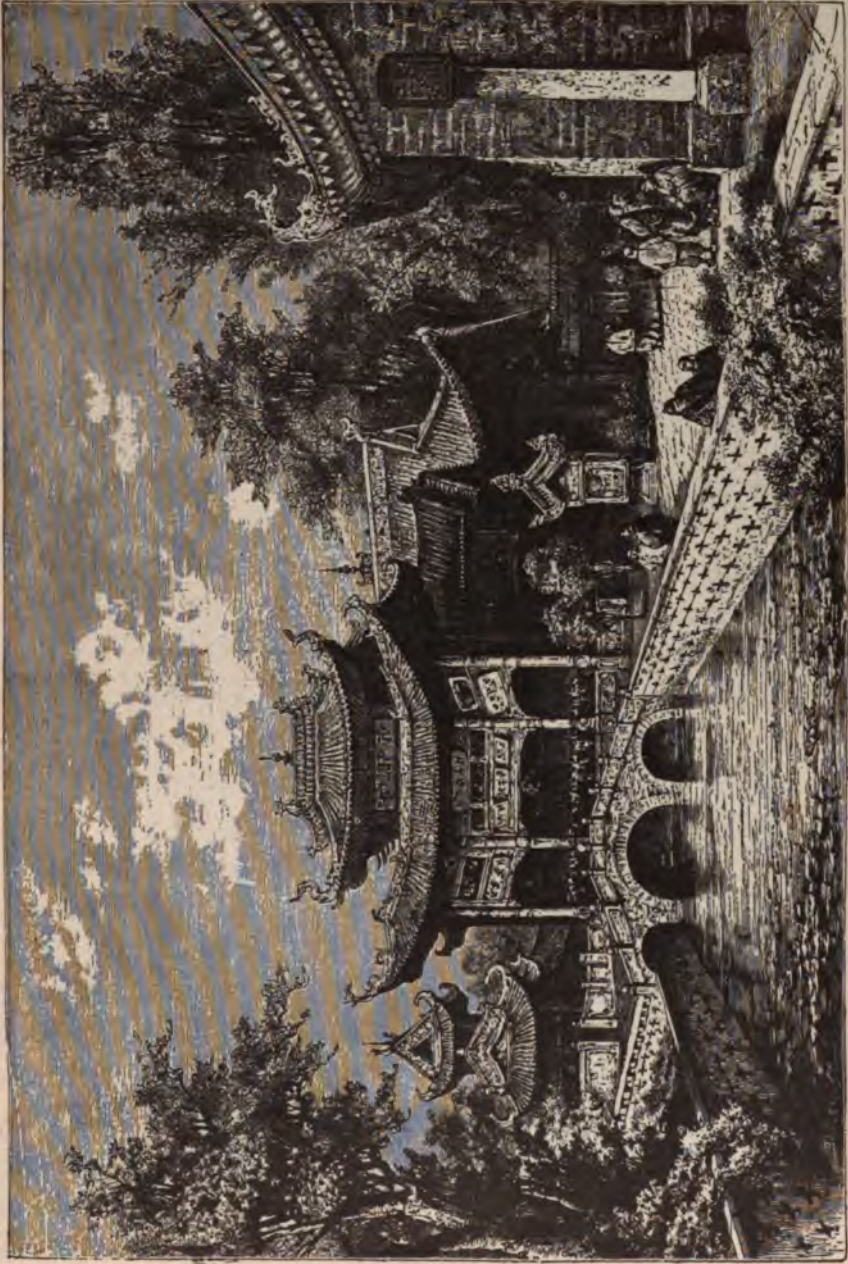
While they were eating, the guests propounded question after question, much the same as the schoolmaster had asked the night before. Then Scott ventured to ask the prefect if they were to leave that day for Hong Kong, when the prefect opened his fat little eyes very wide, and tapped his forehead, and replied, "Yes, of course, of course, but not to-day; to-morrow will be quite time enough to begin to think of going to Hong Kong. And in the mean time," he said, "it is very annoying to have our people crowding about you so; the street is already lined far below the gate, waiting for you to finish breakfast. It is very annoying; yes, indeed, it is very annoying. But our people are good people; they do not mean to be annoying; it is your curious dress; they have not seen, as I have, many of your honorable countrymen, and I have thought that if you wore our clothes your journey to Hong Kong would be much less vexing, so I have ordered my tailor to come and find your size, and make you clothes at once, and if you find our miserable hospitality is pleasing and wish to make the disgraceful and idiotic prefect a little present, why the clothes you have on would be very much prized by him as a great joy to remember the brightness which your visit has brought to our dark town."

Scott was almost tempted to believe the prefect was telling the truth when he called himself idiotic, but, in reality, his remarks were thoroughly Chinese, quite polite, and not very frank. He accepted the suggestions, for indeed there was nothing in the world for him to do but accept; and the tailor came and took the measure, and when asked when the clothes would be ready, replied, as every Chinaman always replies, "To-morrow." And the crowds came, morning, noon, and night, and the schoolmaster remained their attentive chancellor.

"This is so very different from India," said Scott; "even when we were way up on the Narbada River the natives would only look at us and turn about their work again. I'd give 'em a cent to do so here."

The natives with whom Paul had come in contact in the Himalayas, who in custom and habit had been so much more like these, were, indeed, men of this same great empire. For, impossible though it would have seemed to Paul, he was not now very far away from the very spot where he and Scott had met among the mountain peaks; and the men among whom he had then been living, on the Thibetan slopes, looked to the Son of Heaven, seated in the Pavilion of Heavenly Rest in the city of nine gates at the North.

The boys did not, at first, venture beyond the monastery, with its gardens and groves, and priests and pilgrims. But from its position on the hill they obtained a much better impression of the town than when they wandered farther into its mysteries. It was like almost all Chinese cities. They are all built on about the same plan, nearly square, surrounded by a high wall, flanked with towers at equal distances, and outside the wall a ditch, which about Wucheun was always dry. But while the streets of some of the cities of the North are



TEMPLE GROUNDS

comparatively broad and regular, and straight as an arrow, those of Wucheun, like all the cities of the South, were in great part very narrow, and crooked as the letter S. The houses were very low, rarely more than one story high. The finest were built of brick and wood finish, varnished over the outside and roofed with gray tiles; while the poorer, and they were much the larger number, were of wood and clay, with thatched roofs. They could discover the houses of the wealthy by the beautiful gardens and courts about which the houses were built. The windows were all of paper or transparent shell, instead of glass. The edges of every roof turned up, and the corners were decorated with dragons. Very few private houses in all China can be called really magnificent, though some of the public buildings are very fine. There were none of these, however, to be found in Wucheun. The pagoda was the only building of any architectural beauty in the town.

They strolled into the temple with huge idols and any number of small idols arranged in an endless procession, and watched the priests chanting their prayers and practising all sorts of superstitious rites to attract the pilgrims; for in the spring, especially, all the roads leading to these pagodas are lined for miles with people making their way to the shrines. Now and then one passes a procession of old people, where the youngest will be over seventy-five, hobbling and tottering onward, coming at times from more than a hundred miles away, or women coming to remind the gods that they have lived long lives of abstinence from flesh and fish, and to ask, therefor, a happy transmigration for their souls. But the people were very noisy and the temple was very dirty. There did not seem to exist such a sentiment as reverence for the place. The worshippers smoked their pipes and talked and



IN THE TEMPLE.

even shouted when the din about the altars increased; for the priests, too, made as much noise as was possible. They beat upon little drums and on what they called musical instruments. All around there were gaudy decorations, broad stripes of bright-colored silk and paper brilliantly painted. There were panels and mirrors and flowers, real flowers and shrubs growing in flower-pots, and imitations of flowers, and symbolical signs, such as hands and knives and dragons' heads, and banners attached to long poles. Then there were tables that looked like refreshment stands, and, indeed, that was precisely what they were, for it matters very little to the priests how they make their money, so long as they make it. But the sweetmeats were not to eat, after all; that is, they were not for the pilgrims who bought them to eat. They bought them of the priests, and placed them in front of paper dolls, representing deceased ancestors, and then went their way. In the course of time it would seem as though these paper dolls must be completely buried in bon-bons, but to prevent this the kind-hearted priests keep reducing the collection, and thus they obtain a fresh supply to sell over again.

Scott was naturally shocked by all this, and turning to the schoolmaster with his great wooden-rimmed glasses, who always accompanied them, he asked, —

“Do you really believe in all this?”

“Not in the least,” replied their solemn companion, without the slightest idea that there was anything surprising in the fact.

“These priests believe,” said Scott.

“Not at all,” replied the schoolmaster, calmly.

“Well, certainly these people do.”

“I think not! Oh, no, surely none but the most poor and ignorant! It is quite nonsensical.”

“Well, what in the world are they up to, then?” Scott asked, in astonishment.

“They are only showing their reverence and respect for their



A WOMAN WORSHIPPING.

departed relatives, which is by all means quite a proper thing to do,” replied the schoolmaster, solemnly.

“It is, indeed,” said Scott, “but is that all they come here for?”

"Oh, no, some of them have had bad luck, and they come here to see if they can change it! Some of them are grow-



ONE OF THE PILGRIMS.

ing old, and if there is anything to be gained in this way they want to gain it. Some of them are ill or cripples, and have spent their money for doctors without gaining relief, so they come here to try this. It is quite nonsensical. No one who is well and fortunate comes here except to reverence his ancestors. But a little ill luck brings us all to it, quickly enough," he added, with characteristic Chinese fidelity. "But come with me to my school, beyond the pagoda, and I will show you something in which we all believe."

The boys readily followed him into a large room, where his assistant was carrying on the regular exercises of the day.

The master was very correct in saying that the school was something in which they all believed, for all China, from north to south, and east to west, believes, firmly and emphatically, in the god Literature. A word, no matter what it means, is an object of reverence. Their written language is their pride and glory, and no wonder, for so far as it extends, which is not very far, it is the most complete and comprehensive language in the world, and capable of the most delicate shades of meaning.

For example, we say, "The man carried the basket," while in Chinese, that one word "carry" would indicate whether he

carried it on his head, under his arm, in his hand, on his back, on his shoulder, or upon a pole, as is quite the custom.

These schools are kept up all the year round. There is no such word as "vacation" for the Chinese. In that, at least, the language is very weak. The children go to school at sunrise in the morning, and stay till ten o'clock. Then they go again at noon, and remain till five in the winter, but in summer they do not return to school till evening.

There were no classes in the master's school which Scott visited, nor are there, indeed, classes in any of the lower schools of China. How could there be? It would be quite impossible for two people to know precisely the same amount, and study there means simply committing to memory, individually, either the different shapes of the different words, or else the different words that following each other make up the profound Chinese classics.

Every child in the room, large and small, was studying. Scott was sure of that, and so was the master, because they were all of them shouting. No two were shouting the same thing, but they were all shouting, and possibly that is where they cultivate the universal habit of going through life shouting in that same way.

They all of them stopped shouting and began to stare the moment the two strangers entered, and, like their fathers and mothers, they were on the point of making a rush upon the visitors when a stern command from that dreaded individual with huge wooden-framed glasses set them all studying again with redoubled energy, and in all the bedlam it was most of all astonishing to see how the master kept track of each piping voice and continually called one and another to account for some mispronunciation.

"Some of the children must be rather young to understand it all," said Scott, looking aghast upon the great black tangles which the little shaven-headed boys were rattling off as words.

"Oh, they do not understand it at all!" replied the master as complacently as he would have said that they did not understand Scott when he spoke in English.

"How is that?" Scott asked in astonishment.

"Why, they are only taught to pronounce the characters as they see them written, and always to pronounce the same character in the same way. It will be quite time enough when they grow older to teach them what those characters mean. It would do no good to know their meaning if they could not make the character or tell it again when they saw it."

"But how are they sure about pronouncing and ever getting it again the same?" asked Scott.

"It is just what they are doing now," replied the master. "They are repeating the words over till they learn them by heart, and when they can properly turn the back on the book, that is the end of so much."

Turning the back on the book is only a Chinese term derived from the fact that after the scholar has repeated a line or a page, as the case may be, so often and so correctly that he is ready to venture his success against a flogging, for he will surely have one or the other, he goes to the teacher, hands him his book, turns his back, and repeats what he has learned. It is simply committing word for word, page after page, of the ponderous Chinese classics, without knowing any more about it than you would know about Latin, if you had never studied it, by simply committing to memory; and at last Scott began to comprehend what the missionary had said to him about the whole system of China being one great memorizing machine.

All about the room hung strips of paper, with words on them two or three feet square, for beginners to begin upon, and at one end were piled up huge books of wisdom and rites and philosophy for the wisest to grow wiser on.

"Very few children remain long enough to have these deep things explained to them. It is quite nonsensical for them to try to understand. They are too stupid, and have to give up or be flogged to death, which is not at all pleasant," added the master. And though it was doubtless a very great joke, and quite intended as such by the master, when he said "flogged to death," (for who ever even heard of a Chinese student being flogged to death?) it is still very true and a very grave fact it is, that many a literary aspirant in China drops dead from sheer exhaustion over his work. In the great examinations, of which the missionary spoke, it is a common thing to carry one or more poor fellows from the cells, each morning, stark dead. They even have a regular system about it, and a regular gate at the rear of the great examination hall, for the express purpose of getting the place rid of dead bodies. It would be a bad omen and create a great many questions to carry those bodies out of the main entrance. And it is also a fact that when pupils are taken to be trained for the stage, their parents or guardians, or whoever has charge of them, are obliged to sign a contract with the teacher, exonerating him from any blame in case the poor little pupil is really and actually flogged to death, for in this department, at least, it is everywhere considered that excellence can only be obtained through the active agency of the unmerciful lash. And the wretched little victim, expecting some day to be a *prima donna* (for men always represent the women on the Chinese stage), while he is going through that bitter "course of sprouts," has, for his only solace, the satisfac-

tion that his teacher bore precisely those same lashes before him, and that if he is a good boy and bears it well and becomes a great actor he may some day be a teacher, too, and give to other little boys the very same kind of floggings that he is receiving.

There was no such horror as this connected with the principal school at Wucheun, however.

"If they are able and willing to have all these mysteries explained to them," the master continued, "we then begin the explanation of the great books."

"What do the books sound like?" asked Scott.

The master took up the first book, written by Confucius, and began with the first line. But as everything is precisely the opposite of English, and the lines run up and down the page, instead of across it, he apparently began with the very last word, and read, "Man, before the creation, was a saint."

"What makes the lines go up and down?" asked Scott, interrupting him.

"Why do you stand up when you walk?" asked the master.

"Because it's the natural way," Scott replied.

"And why should man's thoughts lie grovelling on the ground when his body lifts his head erect?"

"Some sense there. Go on, please," said Scott.

"This book teaches of the nature of man after the creation, of the necessity of education, the importance of having social duties and performing them, of the sun, the moon, and the stars as the three great lights, of the four seasons, of the five elements, and the five virtues, philosophy, justice, wealth, genius, and truth, of the six kinds of grain and six classes of domestic animals, of the seven vices, of the eight notes of

<p>書有六體曰篆曰隸曰楷曰行曰草曰宋</p>	<p>書有六體曰篆曰隸曰楷曰行曰草曰宋</p>	<p>書有六體曰篆曰隸曰楷曰行曰草曰宋</p>	<p>書有六體曰篆曰隸曰楷曰行曰草曰宋</p>	<p>書有六體曰篆曰隸曰楷曰行曰草曰宋</p>	<p>書有六體曰篆曰隸曰楷曰行曰草曰宋</p>
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music, of the nine degrees of relationship, of the ten great successions of dynasties."

"Rather profound, is n't it?" Scott asked.

"And what would be its value were it not profound?" inquired the master.

"But haven't you any light reading, any boys' stories?" asked Scott. "Are there no public libraries?"

Public libraries! The schoolmaster would not have known the term could Tao-sen have translated it, and Tao-sen could not translate it, for there is no such thing in China. There are reference libraries in the great colleges, and the wealthy and the literary have large and very valuable private libraries, which, with their national courtesy, are open to their friends, but they all contain precisely the same assortment of books, the great and standard classics. Books of light reading, such as most abound in our public libraries, are sold cheaper in China than anywhere else on earth. They are of very little value at the best, chiefly in the form of dramas. The author never becomes rich in China. Possibly, after all, China is not so very unlike some other countries in this respect. If Confucius or one of the literary trio did not write a book, the reader of it does not care a straw who did, and so far from becoming identified with his works, an author never even so much as thinks of putting his name to a book he has written. But the schoolmaster was right when he said that this literary side of Chinese fancy was something in which they ALL believed. The poorest prod, plodding in the gutter, believes in it. The Son of Heaven on the imperial throne believes in it. So emphatically and thoroughly do they believe in it that the very beggar will save with zealous care anything on which a single word is written, and the rich man in all his silks will stoop in the street

to pick up a piece of paper on which anything is printed rather than step on it. There are people who make it their life-work to go about with two baskets hung at the opposite ends of a pole and balanced over their shoulder, for the express purpose of gathering up every bit of printed matter they can find and carrying it to the temple. There is even a great society in China, with vast branches and a sound official corps, and well-regulated system, for this same collecting. When they have gathered a mass together they burn it. So very far does this feeling of reverence for words extend that the government, only a few years ago, called the attention of its sub-



GATHERING OLD PAPER.

jects to the fact that porcelain, and all sorts of pottery, and decorated woods bearing written words, were daily being broken, then, injured, thrown away in refuse heaps, never to be destroyed, but to lie forever in disgrace and defilement, and thereupon ordered that no design of any sort, even so much as *looking* like a Chinese word, should ever again be placed upon any such manufactures.

As for "books for boys," the master understood the term, but had never heard of such an application. It was his private opinion, and he quite agreed with all China in it, that a boy who was able to read at all was really old enough to read words of wisdom, and who in all the world ever wrote such words of wisdom as Confucius? Hence he very plainly came to the

conclusion that when a boy learned to read he should read Confucius.

“I suppose it takes you all your life to learn to read?” Scott said, innocently enough.

The master smiled. He would have roared had he known what a very popular belief it is in the Christian world that the Celestial student always grows gray before he masters the rudiments of his written language, and then that he always forgets the first part long before he has learned the last.

“A boy who is twelve years old,” he said, “and cannot read rapidly and well should be smartly flogged and set to gathering snails. A man of a hundred years never yet read better than he should.”

This was a very sage bit of wisdom, and to prove it he called a boy a little older than Paul to his side, and opening a book bade him read a page, which he did, and did it well. Scott's notion was founded on the tales that wonder-loving travellers tell, founded on fact, no doubt, and then beautifully varnished like the outside of a Chinese mansion. The fact is a fact, that many a brilliant student delves in that intricate language his life long, solving the technicalities of some of its obtuse philosophies. Did you ever take an English dictionary and experiment therewith to discover how many words of the English language you fully understood? One in ten, perhaps, certainly not more than one in five, though surely you are the brightest scholar in your class. How curious it would be should a Chinaman, on this account, say that you had not learned to read.

“How many people in Wucheun know how to read?” Scott asked.

Again the master smiled as he replied, —



OUT IN THE STREET.

ART. VERMILION

"Of the men, all of them."

Scott was now so thoroughly astounded that he quietly decided that the whole information he had been receiving was a vast fabrication, and doubtless in this particular instance the statement was, indeed, well garnished with proverbial national pride. Yet in a sense it was quite true, and Scott understood it afterward when he walked through the streets of Wucheun, and, indeed, he wondered instead, how it was possible for *any one* to live, even in this part of China, somewhat away from literary centres, and not know how to read. The temple was no exception in its collection of printed sheets of bright-colored silk and paper. The streets were lined with them. Before each shop there hung such a collection of broad strips, in all sorts of fantastic fashions, and all printed over in great letters, as one might look for before a museum of living curiosities, walking skeletons, fat women, giant brothers, and the world-renowned "what is it?" located for a few weeks only in some city of America. These were only the regular streamers of information, however, before the most every-day of ordinary establishments. Then where there were no shops, which, indeed, is a very great exception anywhere in China, the walls were covered with posters and placards, either conveying information to the people from some of their various fathers and mothers, as they call their rulers, or oftener conveying some valuable suggestions to those same fathers and mothers from their humble and loving and faithful children, telling them what those children proposed to have and what they did not propose to have. An imperial edict always closes with the great words, "RESPECT THIS," so these imperative suggestions always close with "Behold The Humble Petition." Then almost everything that is for sale behind the multitude of flying sheets is also

covered with words. They see a word or more before them when they drink their tea and when they hold their chopsticks. Every palanquin is decorated like the back of a pack of fire-crackers. Every lantern which burns at night has a word or more upon it. Often clothes are embroidered with mottoes. Proverbs are written over gates, doors, and windows. Baskets have words upon them indicating the occupation of the coolie who carries them down the street. Every fan in China is made to bear some valuable information, and every mortal Chinaman carries a fan. Every wall of every room is more or less adorned, and from one end to the other China presents the appearance of some Vanity Fair, a great bazaar in holiday costume. So plainly is this true that a boy or girl, even in America, would be considered very ignorant who had not so often seen the written language of China that it had altogether ceased to be a novelty. Is it really remarkable that almost every Chinaman has some faint idea of what it is to read?

Wealthy parents often employ a private tutor for their children, and this grave schoolmaster of Wucheun was also private instructor for the little family of the fat prefect.

CHAPTER XII.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN CHINA.

THERE is no rule for teaching, no Kindergarten system or any other system, yet there is a most remarkable harmony in the public schools in all vast China. The question what to study is one that never occurs. What in the world could they study but the Chinese classics? And there is not a little village, not even a little cluster of houses, at least through all the South of China, where there is not a school-master, usually residing at the pagoda, and a school, even though there may not be a half-dozen children in the town. Even in the vast and floating population, whose homes are upon the great rivers and the lakes, even in the poorest of poverty's-canal boats, often bearing four generations in their dismal holds, one is sure of finding, no matter what else is lacking there, a little writing-desk, with soft brushes which supply the place of pens, an arithmetical machine, an annual register, something like a "Farmer's Almanac," and pamphlets upon some of the profound mysteries. But the master has more to do than simply to hear his pupils read. He must instruct them, according to their rank in society, in all the great rites of public and private politeness. So that the chances are that before the pupil has done with his master he will have learned something or other that it is really worth his while to know.

More than one day went past, but the prefect did not appear.

Evidently to-morrow had not come. Scott began to grow somewhat excited and anxious over the delay, but Paul enjoyed himself so heartily and seemed so utterly oblivious to the fact that there was any future to borrow trouble from, that while at times Scott was vexed with him, at times he found the child's influence very strong in relieving him of the sharp edge of his fears till he almost forgot them. And all day and every day they had an uninterrupted line of callers from the town.

But they did not come as the wicked little street Arabs in our own civilized land run after a Whang Lee who has ventured beyond the confines of his wash-house, to see how long he will bear stoning without appearing to be hurt, how long they can hoot at him without making him mad, how near they can come to the button on his cap with a good-sized snowball, how much mud they can spatter over his white shoes and blue breeches before he will resent it, and how easy it is for him to get himself arrested, tried, fined, and imprisoned, if, as happened the other day in Boston, he does really lose his temper, make a successful grab, and into the confines of his laundry drag and smartly punish some urchin who has been plastering his red and black signs and his front window with a generous supply of well-moistened dust.

The third day the tailor returned, and when they found the amount of work he had done, it did not seem at all surprising that he had been so long. There were four complete suits, throughout, for each of the two boys, and very pretty suits they were. From shoes to caps, and even fans, nothing was lacking, and in the finest suits, the two which Scott suggested must be intended for their "Sunday clothes," he had surely shown himself a most remarkable workman. They were of silk, care-

fully finished, and even embroidered, with little caps to match, and each boy, too, found a most remarkable overcoat, of heavy silk on the outside, and lined with fur, so soft and delicate that Paul yielded to the sudden impulse to roll his curly head and rosy cheeks about on the tempting folds as they lay upon his mattress.

There was no fitting and changing, taking in a little here and letting out a little there, where the tailor had failed to hit upon the precise point for a seam. How could there be? There is no such thing as fit to a Chinese costume. It is always large and loose. The under garments are bound about with a girdle. The outer clothes are very loose, with bagging breeches and a very loose and not at all ungraceful coat. Scott thought it the perfection of a costume for Paul, as he looked with loving pride upon the laughing face and golden head popping out of the steel-blue silk which with a gilt cord was bound about his neck, and he responded with a hearty laugh as the little mimic thrust his tiny feet into the immaculate little shoes, with thick, snow-white soles, and began trotting about the room precisely like a Chinaman, uttering short words and simple phrases which he had already learned of the Chinese language. Then the thought stole over him that it was very different from Hari-Paul, after all. It brought back most vividly the morning, long ago, up in the Himalaya Mountains. It seemed as though his brother were leaving him. When he saw the tailor folding up the little suit which Paul had just taken off, preparatory to sending it to the prefect, the very last link seemed snapping which bound them to America. He went to the tailor, and with the help of Tao-sen he persuaded him to try his skill at making another suit for Paul like the old one he had taken off. He did not care for himself, but Paul should

not be a Chinese boy when they reached Hong Kong. The very aptness with which he was so rapidly becoming one already startled Scott.

That very afternoon the tailor returned with the imitation, and so perfect, though the result of only ten hours' work, that Scott, inexperienced in detecting the delicate differences in shades and textures, could scarcely tell it from the original. He looked it over very carefully, however, for he had far from outgrown his early convictions that because an article bore the odor of China about it, was good and sufficient cause for suspecting at once that it must be a fraud. But look as he might, he could find nothing wrong, nothing but an ungainly piecing, and, worst of all, of another material, on one of the sleeves. He called the attention of the tailor to this, with no intention however, of insisting upon its being changed.

"Do you not wish it so?" the tailor asked.

"Of course not, but it does not matter," Scott replied.

"No, no. It does not matter," said the tailor, and so saying he took a curious little knife from a bag fastened to his waist, and adjusting his spectacles, he deliberately ripped off a wholly superfluous piece of cloth adding, "You said it must be exactly like the other."

Scott laughed heartily as the piece came off, disclosing a perfect sleeve beneath, and he remembered that on board the "Tigress" Paul had made a bad rent in his sleeve, during one of his days among the sailors, and that the missionary's wife, having nothing of the same to repair it with, had only succeeded in securing cloth that would supply the color from one of her own dresses.

"Did you ever see anything like it, Paul?" Scott exclaimed, when the tailor had again departed.

"Why, yes, my old jacket was just exactly like it," Paul replied.

Then the prefect called again, all in his state magnificence, sending due notice of the fact before he came, and two fine camphor-wood trunks, beautifully brilliant with varnish, for the boys to use in packing away their already quite elaborate collection of worldly goods.

One moment Scott was tempted to think him a complete Chinese humbug, and the next he seemed like one of the most unaccountably kind and generous mortals in the world.

He came in person, quite out of the usual custom, to announce a reception which he proposed giving, the following day, and to which the strangers, as guests of the city of Wucheun, were invited.

"But when are we going to start for Hong Kong?" Scott asked, a little abruptly.

The sleek, fat hand patted the smooth forehead an instant then, smiling as ever, the prefect replied, "For Hong Kong yes, yes, to start for Hong Kong. You should know all about it; you are of course anxious to start at once, and it must be at once; the arrangements are almost perfected; you must go comfortably; you must go as such noble representatives of your noble nation should. It is hard in our miserable and degraded Wucheun to produce in an instant such things as must be had to facilitate your going to Hong Kong. But, of course, you must go at once. Only grant your bright faces to honor the poor repast in the mean hovel of the disgraceful prefect, to-morrow, and then it shall all be arranged; yes, yes, to-morrow it shall all be arranged."

As a rule, in minor matters, the Chinese live scrupulously to the motto, "Never do to-day what can be put off till to-morrow,"



RIDING IN STATE.

and why not? Even Scott had already discovered that everything else was upside down, and why should not this be?

The country roads of China, for instance, are broad enough, and good enough, thanks to Nature, and are often planted with long avenues of trees, but they are always muddy or dusty; and they are never repaired till some beneficent individual nearly breaks his neck in some deep rut or half-hidden hole at night, and in his gratitude that he did not quite break it makes a do-



HEALTH COMMISSIONER.

nation to repair that portion of the road where he did not happen to be killed. Under the pavements in the towns there is always a sewer, but the sewer is always choked and useless. No one thinks of repairing it, for what would the dogs and the pigs and the ducks do if that sewer were not thus forced to flow above the pavement instead of under it? Those pigs, in particular, are a very great institution in China. They are everywhere; they are long; they are fat; they have very short legs, and very curving backs, like a blooded Arab steed, only that their legs are so short that often their bodies drag upon the ground as they go grunting along; and after the pigs and dogs and ducks have done their work, there is a large force of men who go about

with little baskets, upon precisely the same business, taking everything unclean, no matter what, and selling it at a good price to farmers, for cultivating the soil.

Nor do they repair a house till it is utterly dilapidated. "What use," they say, "to work upon that which is good enough as it is? Wait till to-morrow; to-morrow will be quite time enough to begin repairs."

On their way to the prefect's mansion, which only the rites necessitated his calling a miserable hut, the old schoolmaster took the boys to visit the great paper factory of Wucheun.

"It must be an enormous affair," Scott observed, "for I see that pretty much everything is made more or less of paper."

"Just as paper is made of pretty much everything," replied the man with wooden-rimmed spectacles. But Scott's exalted ideas of what the paper factory must be which supplied all Wucheun were doomed to unlimited disappointment. It was a low, small, square building, papered without and within, by way of advertisement. There were not a dozen workmen in all. They were men born to the profession, men whose children would grow up to be paper-makers after them. Every morning their lives long they had waked up with the one endless routine before them and those four walls of white paper about them, for they ate, and slept, too, in the great paper-mill. Through long experience they had learned to expect just what came day after day, and not to expect anything else, and this sudden entrance of two white faces into their white castle so thoroughly frightened them that they actually ran away, and it was long before the stern schoolmaster, who had taught them all to read when they were children, could induce even those who remained to continue their work. The paper was made from the bark of koon-schon tree, which is known better in America under the

equally incomprehensible name of *Aralia papyrifera*, ground up with lime, and then baked in a kiln. When this is done, the mass is hammered out in the shape of long rolls, and then cut up into slices, as the confectioner behind the great glass window on the street in America cuts up his long and yielding twist of molasses candy for the amusement of a crowd of boys outside,



IN THE PAPER-MILL.

and the benefit of those who come in and buy. These pieces are put into a curious little mortar, and pounded together again with a little hammer that comes very near being worked by machinery, just as near as anything could in China, where there are so many hands ready to work for a miserable allowance of daily bread, which, in this case, is boiled rice and salt herbs. At last these slices are made into a mass again, and this time it comes out as soft as dough, which is placed in a large pot of water till it is completely dissolved. Then with something very

like a sieve they lift water from this pot, allowing it to run back again through the bottom, which is a fine net of bamboo thread, and always there is a thin, white sediment left in the bottom of the sieve. Suddenly throwing the sieve upside down upon the floor, they dislodge this sediment, which falls in a thin, white film. A thousand of these are allowed to lie, one upon the other, then the whole is taken out into the sun to dry, and thus it becomes paper. The process is always the same all over China, but the ingredients differ in almost every factory. The master was quite correct in his statement that paper was composed of pretty much everything, for even among the most common ingredients are bamboo, cotton, the tow of silk, the bark and leaves of many plants, the hair, and even the intestines of animals.

The boys entered their palanquins again, and were carried on to the prefect's house, with its broad gate and open courts, and official guards, and long corridors, and legal halls and halls of justice, before they reached the sanctum within, where the fat prefect threw off his official frown and smoked his little pipe in peace, and entertained his friends in a way that was most fitting the popular prefect of Wucheun.

The dinner was but a repetition of their first breakfast and of every state dinner of China. They only differ in the number and dignity of the guests and the grandeur of the host and capability of the cook. It is an invariable rule that the host does the best he can. Who could do more?

After the dinner, partly in pride, partly in politeness to Paul, the prefect produced his two little sons, of six years and ten. They were as frightened as the men at the paper-mill at first, but Paul was a boy and they were boys, and like two little corks floating about in a basin of water, two boys in the same

room will sooner or later gravitate toward each other and hold fast there. It was not long before the prefect was frowning and warning them of the respectful quiet due to their elders. It was not much longer before the fat prefect had dismissed his



THE WORTHY PREFECT.

native guests, and was flat upon the floor laughing and playing as hard as they, and altogether forgetful that he was the great head of Wucheun, for boys will be boys. While they were romping and rolling about, Paul was every moment gathering in more and more of the impossible language of China, and one

word after another he mastered, and with childish bravery used it over and over again in the most perfect system of learning a language which ever existed. When he was at a loss Tao-sen was always on hand to help him out, and between Chinese and Hindustani Scott found that Paul was really gathering much more amusement than many of his elders have found in the great Celestial Empire. The national habit of interrogation came like second nature to Paul, and he soon discovered the great secret of preventing a Chinaman from asking too many questions. It was to keep him answering so fast that he had no time.

"I've got some sisters," said Paul. "Have n't you got any?"

"Two," said the prefect's youngest son. He did not yet fully understand the delicacy of acknowledging the existence of those little beings which are thought so unnecessary and useless till they are married.

"Well, I want to see them. I like girls," said Paul, decidedly.

The eldest son was shocked, the prefect was stunned. Wanted to see his little daughters! Who ever heard of such a thing?

"Yes, I do. I want to see them. Where are they?" Paul asked.

"It is the way in their honorable country. Let them be brought," said the prefect, recovering a little, and, as his word was law, the two little girls, like two little wax dolls, were produced.

Even Paul could not elicit a whisper from them; but their father, now beaming again with honest pride to see them look so pretty, and to see them so much admired, answered promptly for them.

Only a girl! Ah, what an absurd and unreasonable position it is for our world to take that, because one is only a girl, in China, and cannot be of active value in society, and is by custom virtually sold by her parents and bought for her husband, that therefore she is an object to be dreaded and hated at home.

Are there terrible stories told of a most infernal custom,



CHINESE BABIES.

known to have existed in a little district about Foochow, in which many a baby-girl was murdered by her parents? And did a missionary from China return to this country a few years ago with a heart-rending story, which he told in many a church and at many a monthly concert of prayer for missions, of a family of five daughters who met at their father's house some years after marriage, and recounting their sufferings, agreed together to go and drown themselves? It is true, terribly true;

and it is true, too, that death is not looked upon with such horror in China as it might be, and that the national apathy of the people renders them less appreciative, perhaps, of the great and passionate vitality and joy of existence which is professed by some others. But all this is only a part of the grandly imperfect and speculative way in which the world has formed its opinion of China. And to say that the prefect loved his two girls, loved them as really, doubtless, as he did his boys, is only to say that he was like the very great majority of four hundred millions of his countrymen.

"What's your name?" Paul asked, touching the soft cheek of the youngest.

The elongated corners of her eyelids trembled and tears gathered, making the dark eyes brighter, for she was thoroughly frightened; but the prefect answered promptly, —

"It is Seu-chio."

"What does it mean?" asked Paul, recalling the missionary's statement of the value that always accompanies Chinese names.

"It is The Gift of a Pearl," replied Tao-sen.

"That's pretty," said Paul, "and she looks like a pearl, too. Her cheeks are just the same color."

Which was very true, for while none of the Chinese are really white, their color varies from the dark-skinned coolie, almost as brown as a Hindu, to the softest of pearl, with just a tinge of that amber which belongs to the Orient.

"And what's your name?" asked Paul, pointing to the youngest brother, who was fat and ruddy, strong and happy, and evidently, as the prefect had said of him, "the jewel in his father's crown of joy."

"My name is Yao Sen-mei," replied the boy, who had

suddenly been made very brave by discovering that his sisters were so much more frightened than he.

"And what does that mean?" asked Paul.

This the prefect was obliged to explain, for the little fellow had not yet delved deeply enough to understand it all.

"'Yao' is my name, the name of the family," he said, which gave Scott another item for his list of upside downs, when, being the family name, it was put first, instead of last.

"It means elegant," added Tao-sen; "and the 'Sen-mei' means Third Sister."

"Cæsar! that's a funny name for a boy," said Scott. Though in reality it was not at all a funny name for a boy, but really a very common name.

The girls in China are often given no other names till they are married than the number indicating the order in which they were born; and as two girls in one family is considered a very liberal allowance, she who must bear the name of "*Third Sister*" is looked upon as most unfortunate, in a social point, till the name itself is one of the humblest that can be borne. And why did this robust and ruddy boy, the pride of the prefect, bear it? Why, for that very reason, and no other.

Had his father given him some name which, in a language so full of flowery eloquence, would have expressed his joy and pride, it would, at the same time, have been so magnificent as to be in great danger of attracting the attention of some disagreeable dragon or goblin in the dense throng of evil spirits. Never a spirit would be so foolish as to attack a child with such a humble name as *Little Third Sister*.

"Does he really believe all this?" Scott asked of the schoolmaster.

"Not in the least. Not in the least. It is a custom, a very

old custom, and surely it does no harm," solemnly replied the grave philosopher.

When they were preparing to leave, Scott said to Paul, "Paul, see if you cannot get the prefect to set the time when we can start for Hong Kong. He must let us go. I've urged and urged and it does no good."

"That ain't the way Dhondaram did it," Paul replied, with a touch of dignity in the way he tossed his curly head, and, with a semblance of the muni's shrewdness, turning to the great and portly prefect, the little Beverly boy, with all the calm authority of his Hindu teacher, remarked,—

"We are going to Hong Kong in the morning."

"In the morning, in the morning. Yes, yes, of course. All will be ready at once. To-morrow we will look over all the preparations and see that all is ready."

"You'll have to come pretty early, for we're going to start right after breakfast," said Paul.

The prefect opened his eyes very wide. "But the palanquins," he exclaimed, "The palanquins will not be ready."

"We can walk," said Paul.

The prefect opened his eyes still wider. Then he laughed, and only said, "It would be a very long walk for your little feet."

"Be sure and come early, for we shall start right after breakfast," Paul repeated, as they left the door. "We must, you see, that's why."

"I'm afraid you made him angry, Paul," said Scott, as they were being carried home.

"I guess not. He did n't look very mad, did he?" Paul asked. "And then you said that we *must* go, any way, and that's the way Dhondaram would do it. He just said what

was going to be so, and it always was so. And he did n't make people mad. But then they did n't dare to be mad with Dhondaram."

His words, however, had taken effect. The muni's secret was good in India, good anywhere, and especially good in China. Indeed, it was the lever which moves the world. It was the inexorable "must be."

The Chinese have a proverb, "The man who removed the mountain was he who began carrying away the small stones."

The prefect thought of this when he recalled Paul's words, an hour or two after, and made up his mind that something must be done. He followed the boys to the pagoda, and at last began in earnest to discuss their departure.

"I have been keeping you unkindly," he said, after his fashion, adding a great deal, of course, that was superfluous and only polite; "yes, very unkindly."

"You have been very kind, indeed! We should like to stay with you always, but our friends must think that we are dead. We must reach Hong Kong, to let them know," said Scott.

"You have been very, very good," said Paul, marching up and kissing the astonished prefect, who, though he had seen Americans, had never seen anything like that before, for Paul's heart rebelled against the injustice of his being called cruel and unkind, even by himself. The prefect recovered from his astonishment, sufficiently at least to realize that it was only a mark of honest affection, as Paul continued, "If Sen-mei was far away in America, and you did n't know where, would n't you think he'd better come home, even if he had to walk?"

This brought real, honest tears to the prefect's eyes, and patting Paul upon the head he said, "My boy, my boy, I see

in a new light; I have only thought of you as friends from a far country, friends whom I delighted to honor, but you teach me more than this. There are others whom I injure in detaining you. Yes, yes. There is a father. You should have gone to him long ago. I have been cruel."

"You have been very good," Paul asserted, firmly.

"I wish we could pay you in some way. But you know how helplessly we came on shore," said Scott.

"You have paid me a thousand-fold already," exclaimed the prefect. "When one wishes to please a friend, he has already found a means to do so. The resources of the heart are not to be counted in gold," he added, earnestly. This was an excellent sentiment, and the embodiment of a Chinese proverb, and doubtless, too, the prefect meant it. But it is equally probable that he felt quite confident of receiving something that *could* be counted in gold when the rich relatives, of whom Tao-sen had spoken so freely, should have learned how well he had treated the strangers.

"But," said he, "there is one great obstacle in the way of my sending you at once to Hong Kong. It is beyond this province, and, in this great empire of eighteen provinces, I am only a little prefect of a little town. If you were to go direct to Canton and Hong Kong, you would pass through districts where the voice of the prefect of Wucheun would be less than the chirping of yonder cricket, for it would not even be heard at all. They would take you and bind you, and rob you, and —" Here the prefect only shuddered, and Scott shuddered and felt quite inclined to remain in Wucheun for the rest of his days.

"Why not let me write to my people?" asked Scott.

"That you may do and welcome. The letter shall go to Hong Kong by boat," replied the prefect.

"And why cannot we go by boat?" Scott asked, suddenly.

The prefect found he had made a mistake in suggesting that, and now he was obliged to tell the whole difficulty. In short, it was this: As fire spreads through the forest, the news of the rescue of the strangers, who were supposed to be richer than their own weight told many times in gold and precious stones, had spread through the province, and as the prefect was literally dependent upon the whim of the great governor, he dared not send away his prize without instructions. If he should send the boys to Hong Kong they would be quite beyond his reach. "People forget a storm when the skies are blue," he said; and what if there should not be any ransom after all, the governor would be angry, and very soon there would be another prefect in Wucheun. He cared more about that than he did about the ransom.

"Well, what can we do?" Scott asked. "We must do something."

"You must. Of course you must," replied the prefect, tapping his forehead. "And there is this that you can do, you can start at once for Kweilin, the capital of the province. There is the governor. You can speak with him, eye to eye. He can read your thoughts better than I can translate them to him. You can tell him that you must go to Hong Kong, and he can send you there."

"Where is Kweilin?" asked Scott.

"Not far from here and not far from Hong Kong, two hundred and fifty miles, perhaps, from each."

"How long will it require to reach Kweilin?"

"Ten days, no more, possibly less," replied the prefect. "Our bearers run rapidly when they are well paid."

"Let's go," said Paul.

"We must go," said Scott.

"You shall go," said the prefect, with a sigh; for, after all, the increased anxiety of trying to determine what to do with the boys, and how to keep them quiet from day to day, had begun to weigh heavily upon him, now that the novelty had somewhat subsided.

"To-morrow?" said Paul.

"Yes, to-morrow," said Scott.

"To-morrow, yes, to-morrow," said the prefect. And this time he meant it, for before he left he gave orders to have everything packed in their camphor-wood trunks, and secretly, that no one might be tempted to rob them, he gave to each a little belt with silver coins in it, to bind about their waists, but warned them not to use the money, as all their expenses to Kweilin would be paid by the mandarins of the towns through which they passed, as they were guests of the province going upon official business to the governor, and this is quite the custom in China.

They were to start in a boat, upon the river, but the last part of the way would be accomplished in palanquins. The trunks were packed. Everything was ready. Early in the morning they started for the boat in one of the prefect's palanquins, while other bearers followed with the baggage. The prefect was in the party, and many of the townspeople, high and low, joined the procession. Only the pigs and the dogs and the ducks did not make so much of a demonstration to speed the parting as they did to welcome the coming guest.

It was a thoroughly triumphal march, however. All the horsemen along the way were obliged to dismount. The coolies, who wore huge straw hats, almost as large as umbrellas, were obliged to take them off, and those who were not quick

enough to show their respect were admonished of the fact by thump after thump on the head from the long rattans carried by the police. For these were the official palanquins, and no



HIGH AND LOW JOINED THE PROCESSION.

matter who was in them, they must have respect due to the official whose name they bore. This is even carried so far that the empty chair of the Emperor is worshipped while he is upon a journey, as though he still sat in state there. A proclamation from the Emperor is brought into the town with loud

acclamations, and he whose duty it is to break the seal and read it must first devoutly prostrate himself before it.

Soon they ascended the deck of the junk which was to carry them up the river, and all of the servants who were to go with them hastened to secure their positions on board, installing themselves according to their own peculiar notions of comfort and luxury.

Now comfort and luxury do not mean precisely the same to the Chinese that they mean to us. Space, infinite space, almost immensity, represents one of our strongest notions of luxury. It is quite the contrary with them. No sooner were the palanquins well placed in secure positions upon the junk, and the trunks safely stowed, than every man, from the military mandarin who commanded the escort to the coolie who carried one of the bamboo poles upon his shoulder, began to hunt for little, out-of-the-way corners, like so many family poodles, searching for the softest rug.

"They're just like their consciences. Body and soul they are india-rubber," said Scott, looking on in astonishment as they quietly packed themselves away. And, indeed, he was quite correct, only that while the conscience is at least supposed to be very small but very capable of stretching, their bodies, though ordinarily large, are quite as capable of the most marvellous contracting. When a Chinaman has a day to spend in undisturbed repose, give him a corner, no matter how small it is, and he will at once proceed to pack himself into it. He will roll himself up, curl himself about, fold himself down, and twist himself around till he has made a perfect nest, and when once he has thus taken full possession he is settled for the day. He will smoke a little, ponder a little, sleep a little. Then he will wake up and begin to smoke again. Indeed, where corners

are scarce it is not unusual to find two or three, and sometimes more, huddled and twisted together like so many kittens before their eyes are open.

All was settled at last. The prefect wished them a thousand good wishes and said farewell. The throng followed his example and returned to the endless routine of the fishing town.



RIVER BOATS.

What had happened? Nothing. Two strangers had come and two strangers had gone. They had seen them come and seen them go. It was only a flash of heat lightning. It had attracted their attention for a moment. It was already forgotten.

Thus left alone, Paul settled himself upon the cushions of one of the palanquins, with almost Chinese resignation, as though

it were quite impossible for anything else to happen for some time to come; but Scott, with more of America, began to prowl about to learn why it was that the sails were not spread and the ropes cast off and the junk set in motion.

There was not a sailor in sight. There was not an officer, unless one poor fellow, forlorn and weary looking, sitting before the low door of the galley or cook-room, might represent authority. He was sound asleep, with his head resting on his knees. Scott shook him. He did not move from this elegant attitude, save to lift his head an inch and roll his watery eyes upward. He had evidently smoked too much opium.

"What is the matter?" Scott asked, sharply. "Why are we not off?"

"Who knows?" the fellow replied. "I am not captain, I am only cook."

"Well, where is the captain?"

"He must be at home."

"And where are the sailors?"

"They have not come from town," he replied; "they will be here at once." And with this his head fell upon his knees again and he slept.

All over the junk, now, there was the liveliest chatting from every little corner, as though the junk were but a vast cage full of monkeys. The men of the escort were playing cards, gossiping, disputing, and smoking. Scott walked nervously up and down the deck. Then he sought the military mandarin.

"Why are we not under way?" he asked.

"Who can tell?" replied the mandarin, stupidly and drowsily, as he looked out of his corner. "I am not captain of the junk."

In despair Scott gave it up, and waited for an hour. Then

he began to lose his temper again, and thoroughly made up his mind that this was only another device of the prefect, and that in reality they were never going to start at all.

In this he was as much mistaken as possible. Everything was going on according to custom; and that American who has not a most unusual stock of patience, or is not extremely anxious for an opportunity to cultivate it, should certainly never think of making a journey in China, most of all of ever enjoying the pleasures of a journey in a junk. He runs a great risk of going mad before the plank is drawn.

About noon the sailors seemed, one by one, to have wakened to the fact that they belonged on board a junk, and last of all the captain came down the wharves, smiling and happy, as though possessed of the entirely new idea that he was commander of a craft which was to have sailed up the river nearly five hours before. First he called the roll, to see that every man was at his post of duty, then they all went to dinner. Dinner was served, too, to Scott and Paul in such dignity as the junk could offer and the markets afford. It was certainly an excellent repast, and both the boys could now munch upon melon-seeds, drink hot lemonade, and use the chopsticks as well as Chinamen.

After dinner an hour or more was devoted to disputes between the officers of the junk and the officers of the escort that might have thoroughly frightened the boys, had they not already discovered that shouting and cursing and threatening all sorts of terrible things really meant nothing, and were almost a necessary incident to everything in China. After these preliminaries they began the slow and tedious preparations, and by three in the afternoon the junk began to move. With a good breeze she sailed nearly two hours, then they

lowered the weighted wooden anchor again and prepared for the night.

As they were leaving the city behind them, and Scott was breathing more easily over their prospects, he could not refrain from comparing the misery which portended their arrival at



AT ANCHOR.

Wucheun, and the promised security and comfort in their departure.

"This is not as bad as it might be," he said to Paul, with a sigh of relief.

"Course not," said Paul. "Nobody hurt us at Wucheun."

The Chinese have a proverb, that a deal of misery would be saved in this world if people would look upward less and downward more in drawing their comparisons.

CHAPTER XIII.

BY JUNK AND PALANQUIN.

THEY came to anchor as the sun went down, just beyond the little village of Wucheun Schi-Li-Pou.

“I thought we were beyond Wucheun, at any rate,” Scott muttered, somewhat disturbed to find that even the fact that they had really been sailing did not seem to alter their position, till it began to appear that Wucheun must be enchanted, and must be holding them forever.

The military mandarin only bowed his head sedately, and replied, “So we are, just Schi-Li-Pou”; *i. e.*, just five li distant. The Chinese have a custom, and not a very bad one, of naming many of their little villages according to their distance from the nearest town.

The village folk came down to the boat, and, according to orders brought by a courier, in advance, from the prefect, they offered either the best hospitality the village could afford, which was very mean indeed, or the money which the prefect had imposed upon them as a tax. Scott and Paul preferred to spend the night upon the junk, so the civil mandarin, whose duty it was to provide for their wants, as the military mandarin was to care for their safety, went into the village with the money, and expended it upon such delicacies as he could discover, no doubt being careful to reserve commission for himself.

The junk was thirty feet long, eight feet broad, and three feet deep. The bottom was flat and the sides were flat. A

floor was laid a little above the water line; beneath it the natives disposed of themselves, while Scott and Paul were made comfortable in a little cabin in the stern, about seven feet high and broad and long, with a bamboo matting for its sides, and a bamboo screen for windows, and mattresses on little frames for beds, with blankets and pillows. The stern of the boat curved upward, entirely protecting the little cabin from the cooler night wind; but no sooner were the boys well arranged for the night than such a scratching and clicking sounded over the floor that Tao-sen was at once recalled and the Chinese lantern of red paper with a gilt dragon was lighted to see what was the matter.

"Nothing," said Tao-sen, looking carefully about the little room.

"Nothing?" repeated Paul, peeping out of his little bunk.

"But it must have been something," said Scott. "Leave the light burning, Tao-sen." And again Tao-sen rolled himself up, just outside the door. When all was still, the scratching and the clicking began again. And Paul upon one side, and Scott on the other, with their chins resting on their hands, watched a grotesque war-dance on the floor of the little cabin. The roaches, if roaches they really are, never begin with the feast. They always take their exercise before dining, and they danced and fought, and tumbled about, as though they already knew what a delightful repast awaited them. The boys, no doubt, thought all this entertainment very fine, the first time they beheld it; but before morning the roaches gave up their dancing and began to bite, worse than mosquitoes or fleas ever thought of biting.

The next night they had quaint little hammocks swung where the mattresses had been; and the roaches found them-

selves outwitted, unless through many tribulations they succeeded in crossing the tight rope.



THE CAPTAIN AND HIS SON.

Just before the cabin was the cooking-room. There was a sliding window in the partition between the two; and in the morning early, Scott was rash enough to push it back and peep

in. There was one little stove in the centre, with one large iron pot or pan; it was not exactly either, but a little of both. This is the substance of ordinary Chinese kitchens, and in that pot they cook their herbs, they fry their fish, they prepare their meats, they steam their rice, and do it well. But Scott saw more than this. The night had been a little cool. The sailors and soldiers were very thinly clad; they had agreed, evidently, that this galley or kitchen offered the warmest retreat they could find, and into it they had piled themselves. It was a mass of feet, hands, and heads, — scarce anything else could be seen on one side of the room, — sticking this way and that, in all sorts of impossible postures. On the other side of this little room two families belonging on the junk were huddled. There were three or four children who had not reached the dignity of being clothed, an old man who had long since passed beyond that dignity, and was stretched upon a mattress with blankets thrown over him, above which appeared his thin, listless face, his helpless arms, and huge, knotted elbows. There were three or four women, one of them with very white hair; all were asleep. One baby was crying, but no one noticed it, and the odor which swept through that little window would have been quite sufficient to have poisoned him, before long. He closed the window instantly, and went out on to the deck, thinking that he never again should be able to eat anything cooked upon that junk. But nature is very obstinate in arguing against a whim which would deprive it of its support, and before breakfast was ready, Scott had gathered such an appetite from the clear and bracing morning air, and the delightful picture of green fields stretching about him, that he entirely forgot the kitchen, whence it came.

As the day wore on the breeze became lighter, and the boat-

men were obliged to push the junk along with poles, till they entered a canal, where it moved more easily with ropes, while the sailors grunted and puffed and trudged along on shore, singing, "Hi-o! ho-o! Hi-o-lo! ho-o-lo!"

It was a curious sensation for Scott, who remembered America much better, of course, than Paul, to stand upon the deck



A WAYSIDE INN.

of the junk as it was drawn along, or sailed along through the broad, green fields of China. Everywhere the industrious population was constantly busied in trade and agriculture. Here and there were villages, with curved-roofed pagodas, farms surrounded by thickets of bamboo, inns, or little stations for refreshment, ever occurring; with bits of fruit, fragments of sugar-cane, pastry made of cocoanut oil, soups, rice, wine, and tea; while over the low hills, and they were very low, there were no cows grazing, no signs of pastures, and over the low,

flat country about them there were no broad country roads, with wagons moving here and there; there were no stage-coaches, no signs of a railroad anywhere, no telegraph poles, no extensive forests, not a sign of anything to remind him of America, and especially of New England. But the strangest of all was to look over that long stretch of green, traversed with canals, though no one can see them from a little distance, lying as they do down under grassy banks, without a fence far or near to indicate their whereabouts, only to see the tall masts and the sagging sails of the junks apparently gliding through the green meadows.

The next day the canal crossed a broad river; the current was strong. The captain of the junk killed a fowl, sprinkled the blood over the boat, nailed the head and some of the feathers to the mast, and sacrificed the body and a large pot of rice to conciliate the dragon of the river, and to secure a safe passage. They then pushed out into the river, and certainly did have a safe passage to the other side. Then they cooked the fowl and ate it with the rice. The civil mandarin of the escort, interested in noticing that Scott and Paul had not joined in the service, asked them what god it was whom they worshipped.

"It is Tien-tchow," replied Tao-sen. The word means the Lord of Heaven. The Chinese word for "god" would mean, equally, any of the hundreds of thousands of gods worshipped in the empire, and the missionaries have been obliged to manufacture this word to explain something more definite.

"Tien-tchow! Tien-tchow!" repeated the little mandarin. "I have heard of him. Let me see, the god whom the Western devils worship is the Emperor of England, is it not?" And it might be thought from this that the mandarin was very igno-

rant, instead of the man of letters which he really was. But it must be remembered that religion is only a fashion in China, and the very last thing to which a man of letters turns his attention. There are abundant facilities offered for those who wish to worship, and there is enough ill luck in China to drive people into one or another temple; and festivals enough drawing every one, as a matter of custom, and ancestors enough who are worshipped by every one, to bring donations, and thus support the temples; but doubtless the priests are the only men in China who really know who or what is being worshipped, and some of them are puzzled if one questions them too closely. It was only a few years ago that the Emperor, in view of this popular ignorance, published an imperial document fully explaining, or at least claiming to, the different theories of the different forms of religion which were then recognized, and closed the paper with a word of fatherly advice to his children to have nothing to do with any of them.

After crossing the Si River they went but little way in the junk; then the palanquin-bearers were brought into occupation. They had enjoyed themselves so thoroughly, while doing nothing, that they groaned and grunted, and seriously objected to touching the palanquins at all.

Did you ever ride far in a palanquin? It is not the most comfortable of carriages for a long journey; but as a change from the junk it was very agreeable to Scott and Paul. They left the canal and struck over the hills. The bearers who carried the palanquin poles upon their shoulders were strong and stalwart men, and fresh enough after their long rest. They moved at a slow trot up hill and down. It made no difference. They sang their song, and so light and full of easy motion was the gait, that from the roadside one would have

thought the bearers, poles, and palanquins were all a mass of springs. They carried long poles, with iron spikes in the end, to assist them in climbing the hills or supporting themselves when the way was slippery; for after a shower the clay banks of China become almost as smooth as ice. When the hill was steep, a long rope was fastened to the palanquin, and a dozen or more of the people to be found ready for work were fastened into the harness. Then going down the hill the rope was placed behind and the men pulled back.

They stopped for dinner in the open park, at one end of a town of a few thousand inhabitants. This was, in reality, the execution ground, and to their horror the boys beheld several skulls in bamboo baskets, hanging above the great gate, just beyond. The military mandarin of the town came and apologized for not having either an execution or a newly severed head to show them. "The fact is," said he, "our miserable village has maintained such remarkable order for some time that our swords are rusting. But we bid fair to have a grand and wholesale execution in a few days."

"What about?" asked Scott, shuddering with horror.

"There has been a murder; a man has been found dead."

The solemnity with which he announced that there had been a murder, that a man was found dead, did not at first seem to agree with the gleeful way in which he had announced the prospect of a wholesale beheading. But one was an act against the law, and the other was an act of justice. It made all the difference in the world, and withal, it was thoroughly Chinese.

"How do you know it was murder?" asked Scott.

"We do not know; we shall soon learn," replied the mandarin. "Come with me and I will show you." He started across the open park and Scott followed him. It made him shudder,

again and again, yet the fascination drew him on, and they approached a large company of village folk, gathered in a circle about the centre of interest. There a pit was dug, in the clay soil, five feet long and about three feet deep and wide. Into this dry branches were piled and set on fire. The fire was kept blazing with oil, till the sides and bottom of the pit were almost white with heat. Then the body of the dead man was hung in a loose net just over the pit. Into the pit rice-wine was poured, and the whole was covered with a tightly woven bamboo frame. Thus everything must remain for two hours. As Scott could not remain for the result, the mandarin explained to him that at the end of that time every scratch, bruise, and wound upon the body would appear with such distinctness that it would be almost impossible not to see at once what instruments had struck the blows, how severe those blows had been, and which had caused the death.

“And if you find that it was murder, what shall you do?” asked Scott, considering after all that what had already been explained to him was nothing more or less than another chapter of Chinese nonsense, while in reality, as he afterward learned, it was a most remarkable discovery, and at times produced most real, valuable, and startling betrayals.

“We have already imprisoned the man upon whose property the body was found. He and his male relatives must be punished.”

“With death?” exclaimed Scott.

“What else could reward him who has taken life?”

“But how will you know that he did it, and why should his relatives die?”

“If he did not, who did? One of his relatives. If they did not, they are guilty. Should they not have protected a



BEHEADED.

man upon their own soil? Should they not know what transpires at their own door? And if they know and will not tell, should they not die? Justice must be done. Is it not written in the great book *Si-guen* that the interests of society make it no less glorious to brave anything to defend one's fellow from the assassin than one's country from an enemy?"

This *Si-guen* to which the mandarin referred is a large and horrible volume, devoted to the most minute characteristics of bodies after various kinds of death, and directions for discovering, even long afterward, how and why death came, and so far from being an absurdity, there are many of its statements which hold prominent positions in the best medical works of our own land.

The rigor, however, with which a murderer is punished has reacted to produce the very worst results. In other lands, when a man wishes to wreak the bitterest vengeance upon an enemy, the first thought is to kill him. In China, on the contrary, he kills himself. Why not? If he killed his enemy he would die himself, in disgrace, at the hands of the law, and his head hang for months at the gate of the city. If, on the contrary, he kills himself at his enemy's door, that enemy, instead, falls into the hands of justice. He is tortured, his family ruined, and he instead bears the stigma of murderer, while the inexorable law usually allows heavy damages to the family of the suicide.

During the afternoon the party crossed a small stream where a dozen natives were engaged in washing for gold. They were not extensive operations and the returns were very small. They dug the sand from three feet below the bed level, and putting it into baskets of bamboo, so woven as to form effective sieves, they poured water through them, allowing it to run

into the river again, down a long trough. When the sand was all washed from the basket they scraped the trough and washed the sediment again, and thus, after many efforts, they obtained a very small portion of gold dust.



GOLD MINERS

In a little village, just beyond, however, they found a far more lucrative and interesting institution, in the shape of a vermicelli factory.

“Soup!” said Scott, as he examined the preparation, while the palanquin-bearers lay by the roadside to rest. “I thought this stuff came from France or Italy, or somewhere or other Don’t catch me eating that kind of soup again!” But had he ever visited the great macaroni yards of Naples, it is quite possible he would have thought this mill a model of neatness.

The room was small. In the centre stood a vertical frame, with a great cross-beam at the top and a movable rod at the

bottom. The dough is kneaded by a bamboo rod, then rings of the tough vermicelli dough are hung on pegs upon the upper cross-beam and over other pegs in the movable rod below. This rod is brought down till they are stretched into a mere thread. These are sprinkled with flour dust and slipped upon another rod to hang till they are dry.



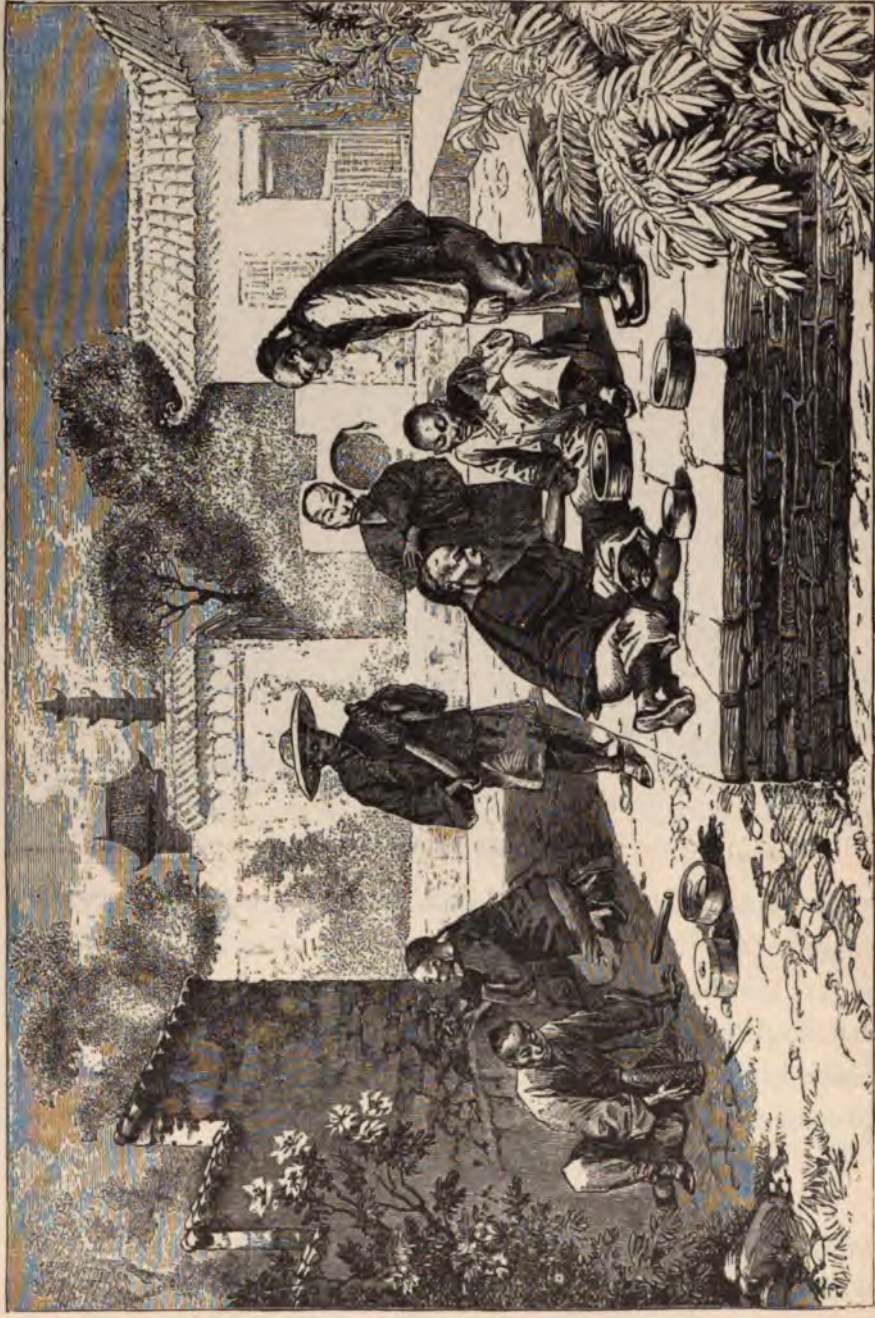
MAKING VERMICELLI.

"I could do that myself," said Scott. It was certainly very simple.

As the boys returned to the street their attention was attracted toward a circle of Chinese, men and boys, in a most excited company, watching something going on upon the ground in their midst.

"What is it?" asked Scott.

"A cricket-fight; come and see," replied the civil mandarin of their escort, and, betraying his own eagerness in the haste with which he started as soon as he had discovered what was going on, he led the way and the boys followed him.



A CRICKET FIGHT.

A cricket-fight! Spain has had her bull-fights. Italy has seen many a human being butchered to make a Roman holiday. Even America has still her prize-fights, under softened names, to avoid the eagerness of the law, and large cities, too morally minded to allow the great Passion Play to be reproduced, will yet yield immense audiences, to shout and roar, while two men, upon the stage, tear each other's flesh with fierce blows that might much better be expended with an axe or sledge. But China is more quiet in her revelry; a cricket-fight is her popular pastime.

The party reached the little circle, where a few boys and several men were upon their knees eagerly watching the combatants. Scott thought of the elephant-fight he had witnessed in India.

The mandarin pushed his way forward, without ceremony, and settled himself upon his knees, utterly oblivious that on one side was a half-naked urchin, on the other a vile opium sot. For lo! it was a cricket-fight! and rich and poor, high and low, meet together, and all distinctions are forgotten in the excitement of a cricket-fight.

Scott was close behind him, and half at the curious circle and half at the battle in the centre, he was soon as lost in wonder, astonishment, and interest as was his friend, the mandarin. With Paul it was a little different. He had not seen India from the same side as his brother. He had learned his lessons of Oriental life from the shoulder of Dhondaram, who would turn from the path rather than tread upon a snail, who would share his rice and milk with a hooded cobra rather than kill it. Paul walked slowly about the circle till he reached a point where his little head rose above the shoulders of the kneeling audience, and there, with lips pressing closer and

closer together, and a frown gathering between his blue eyes, he studied the scene till he fully comprehended what was going on.

It was a cricket-fight. Yes, there were two large black crickets, just like American crickets that whistle in the corners through the long June twilights. Collecting them is a lucrative occupation for boys and even men in China. One sees them anywhere at their work. They go about with a chisel for prying into the crevices where the little creatures hide themselves. They carry a curious bell, made of iron wire, a little tube, several inches long, and two little cups, one of which has a cover. When they catch the cricket they put it into the cup with a cover, in which there are two little dishes, one for food, the other for water, and a little box in which the creature can hide. The wire bell and the tube they use in catching and caging the cricket without injury.

When the time comes for a battle two crickets are placed in the open cup. They do not need even so much inducement to fight as did the elephants of Baroda, for the moment they touch they begin the conflict, with jaws and feet, and it lasts till one is dead or thrown out of the cup.

Crickets in cages are sold in the bazaars, and at times will even bring large sums of money. The people bet upon these battles just as English and Americans bet upon horse-races and other entertainments, and large fortunes have been staked, in China, upon the fates of these little foes.

Slowly, with his eyes fixed upon the cup, Paul pressed his way through the circle. No one noticed him. The crisis was drawing near, the two combatants were locked in a fierce embrace. One of them succeeded in gnawing off a leg of the other. A shout rang from those of the party who had bet

upon the successful cricket. They pressed closer; but Paul had at last made his way past them, and springing into the centre he caught the cup in his hand and hurled it into the grass, over their heads.

“Shame! shame!” he cried in Chinese, standing, straight as an arrow, in the midst of the astonished audience. In his excitement that was the only word of the entire language which he could remember, and if the brutes about him were as much worse than brutish as such people are everywhere else in the world, they doubtless had little idea of what the word meant, even in their mother tongue. But the action, the attitude, the voice, the face, all told the story. Then, too, to look up, so suddenly, from the excitement of a cricket-fight, to find, instead of the tiny black warriors, a little stranger standing in their midst, clad in such clothes as their rich men only could afford to wear, and with white skin, blue eyes, and long, golden hair, such as they had never seen before, produced an astonishing effect, even upon such men as they.

The civil mandarin started to his feet in an agony of fright; for had a Chinese boy done such a thing, he might almost have been torn in pieces by the excited throng, and, had little Paul suffered, the mandarin knew the customs of his own people well enough to know that he would be held accountable, not only by the prefect of Wucheun, but by the great governor of Kweilin.

Scott, too, realized that there was danger, and started forward. Tao-sen, frightened out of his wits, stood behind him, with his teeth chattering and his knees knocking together. But they three were the only ones to move.

Paul was not frightened. He was not old enough and wise enough for that. He did not know that discretion is the better

part of valor. He had witnessed an injustice, and against it, instinctively, his little heart rebelled and his little hand was lifted. The crickets, fighting for the amusement of that crowd, were to him just what Tao-sen had been in the hands of the quartermaster. He was not afraid of the quartermaster then, nor was he afraid of these Chinese about him now. Yet Paul was no more a marvel of bravery than any other boy. He was very easily frightened, and often Scott had laughed at him, and called him a little coward, and doubtless he would often have occasion to again. If a rat trotted over the floor at night, he was very glad to have Scott get into bed with him. Now he forgot about Paul Clayton, and thought only of the poor crickets.

Paul looked about him angrily for an instant; then pointing toward the town, he said, "Now go!" that word of command so common only to those who have authority, in the East, and in a voice that allowed no question. It is strange, perhaps, what little incidents may influence the ignorant. Scott certainly thought so as he saw the spectators sullenly turn, one by one, and leave his brother standing alone.

"Paul, that was a risky thing to do, and it was very foolish," he said, as they went back to their palanquins, to continue their journey.

"What for?" Paul asked. "It was mean what they were doing."

"Yes, it was mean, Paul, but it is the custom here, I guess; the mandarin seemed to know all about it."

"Well, it was mean, if it was custom," said Paul, decidedly.

"That's so, Paul; but you might have got us all into trouble by doing such a thing. They thought it was all right."

“ No, they did n't, or else they 'd been mad,” Paul replied, with a logic so forcible that modern philosophers are just finding it out, and wondering how all the world has overlooked it so long.

“ But suppose they had been mad, Paul, suppose some one had struck you, and they all of them had pitched into you, what could I have done? We're all alone here, Paul. There's no one to help us, and besides, this is a very great nation, and it is not like us. If it has different customs, and mean ones, we must overlook them; we are not called upon to reform all China, just because we have to go through a little piece of it.”

“ I saved those crickets, any way!” said Paul, decidedly, as the bearers lifted the palanquin and started on.

CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE ROAD TO KWEILIN.

THE Chinese are practical, to the very last degree, and they supply, in many cases, an absolute lack of real knowledge by a most prodigious patience. By their sagacity more than by real knowledge they contrive to accomplish very remarkable results. They take time for the fulcrum and patience for the lever, and with these two they are possessed of the great secrets of Chinese success.

They would be quite unable to tell by what laws they obtain many of their really valuable chemical results. They could only show you some old receipt, which for years and ages has produced a certain end, and they are quite confident that it will always continue to do so. The miners would laugh if one asked them to explain how it is that the combination of sawdust and resin which they use makes a sufficient light for them to work by, and never ignites the gases that gather deep down in the earth, where they labor, though surely it does the work, exactly as well as Davy's safety lamp. That is their conclusive argument, and with it they are perfectly satisfied.

News of the strangers' approach had already reached the next city by courier. It is the custom of the country to send a runner in advance of a government ambassador or mandarin of rank, and the gate was surrounded by a dense throng. As soon as they approached, the secretary of the prefect met them and directed the bearers to go to an inn, where rooms had been prepared for them.

It was almost as difficult making their way here as it had been at Wucheun, but being more accustomed to it now, the eager inspection of the crowd did not seem so frightful to Scott.

When at last they reached the inn, however, his spirits failed completely. It had a gorgeous sign, with a name painted upon it which would indicate an earthly paradise, but beside being very small, it was filled with dirt and filth, and with a multitude of uncomfortable occupants, such as swarm in all the inns of China. With much ostentation and many apologies the oily landlord conducted them to a miserable little room just over the kitchen. It had but a single window of oiled paper, thick with dust. The heat was intense, and the odors from the kitchen came even visibly through large cracks in the floor, while the moment they entered, the well-known song of a host of mosquitoes sounded in their ears.

As they went in this way directly to a common inn, and as they wore Chinese clothes, and were made nothing of, after all, the citizens lost their enthusiasm instantly and did not even attempt to follow them. But Scott became furious. The idea of Paul's being obliged to spend the night in such a place was to him so preposterous and outrageous that he lost his temper altogether, and quite forgot about such a thing as policy, and, as it proved, did the very best thing in the world in asserting himself.

"Who sent us here?" he demanded angrily of the landlord.

"The prefect," was the meek reply. "It is the best place in the city. The apartments are not such as the noble guests require, that is evident, but the larger and more elegant rooms are damp and cold. I dared not give them to the men of the West; they would die. Everything shall be done for you. You shall be made perfectly happy here."

This was all thoroughly Chinese; that is to say, a very polite lie from beginning to end, promising utter impossibilities, and Scott expressed his opinion, not elegantly, perhaps, but forcibly, when he adopted Daniel Webster's favorite period, and replied, "Get out!" Tao-sen could not translate it and did not attempt to, and the landlord stood aghast as he heard the order given by Scott to Tao-sen and by Tao-sen to the civil mandarin, "We shall go at once and see this prefect. Have the palanquins here instantly."

"Instantly," replied the mandarin, for in truth he was himself not at all pleased with the prospect.

The streets were dark and deserted. There was no danger, now, of exciting another crowd, and as they went Scott laid out his plan of action. It was a bold step to take, but when he was working for Paul he forgot himself as completely as Paul had in defending the crickets.

Was the prefect astonished at this unexpected call? How could it be otherwise? What did he care for the strangers or the prefect of Wucheun? He did not propose to expend precious silver in making these wanderers comfortable. He would take the sum from the government treasury and put it into his own purse instead. Who would object? Surely not the two who were at his mercy for a supper and a bed.

He was enjoying a quiet smoke and a cup of hot wine and a plate of melon seeds, with a few friends, when to his horror a servant announced the visitors.

"Stupid fellow!" he exclaimed. "Why did you not say that I was not at home?" This he shouted, fiercely, as one always shouts in China when he is in the least excited.

"I did! I did!" declared the servant, "but what did they do! They got out of their palanquins and came directly

through the gate. They followed me across the court, they sat down in the pavilion, and bade me bring them some tea.

"Go again and tell them I am not here!" cried the prefect.

"How can they believe me when they have heard you speak?" asked the servant, glancing toward the pavilion.

"True enough!" growled the prefect; and laying down his pipe he went into the pavilion and greeted the wanderers as politely and cordially as had the prefect of Wucheun, though surely not so sincerely.

Scott had heard the voices, plainly enough, and had he understood what was said before and after the prefect appeared, he might almost have wondered if this were really China at all, and indeed not some part of — America.

After the prefect had finished all his polite phrases and gone through with all his good-mannered antics, and all had been duly translated by Tao-sen, he ended by hoping their quarters at the inn would be of the utmost comfort, thanking them for this visit, and promising to call upon them early in the morning.

"But we shall not be there," said Scott, quietly. "It is not a fit place for a dog."

"Is it possible? Is it possible?" exclaimed the prefect. "I have never been there. But I have heard the very best reports. You must go to some other inn. My secretary shall find you another place."

"They are all bad," said Scott. "The prefect of Wucheun said there was not an inn in China where one could exist, and I think he was right. We have come to stay here to-night. We will pay you, but we will not go away. If you are not careful we will report it all to the governor, to-morrow, at Kweilin."

Possibly the prefect was only amused; at all events he

laughed, and invited the boys to enter the chamber where he and his friends had been smoking, and where hot water and towels were brought, hot tea was served, and before long a thoroughly appreciated supper was steaming on the low table.

Scott was proud of his success, and took the experience to heart as the way to manage a mandarin. And the next morning the citizens, who soon became acquainted with the fact that there was more to the strangers than they supposed, made up for their delinquency of the night before by the most persistent efforts to catch a glimpse of them, even following the little caravan far beyond the city walls and beyond the little villages which always cluster outside the gates.

This was their last day's journey to the capital of one of the eighteen provinces of the great Middle Kingdom, a name given to China by the Chinese, for obvious reasons.

It was noon, and very warm. They had stopped for dinner, and the bearers were lying in the sun, while Scott, Paul, and the two mandarins lay upon the grass under the shadow of some stunted trees.

The nearer they came to the home of the governor, the more uncertain became Scott's assurance. He began to think he might even be a little frightened in the presence of the sedate and grand official. He began to ask himself what he should do when he found himself there, and why it was, indeed, that he was going, at all, to the governor. He began to wonder, too, what sort of a man he should see, when he saw him, and how he should be expected to behave himself, and out of all this came a long conversation with the mandarins.

"I suppose," said Scott, "that this governor at Kweilin is a good deal of a big bug, is he not?"

Tao-sen, innocently enough, translated the question literally.

The two mandarins opened their eyes very wide. "A bug! the great governor of the province a big bug! Oh, no! he is a man, a very great man," replied the civil mandarin.

"That's all right," said Scott; "but when we come to Kweilin, to-night, what is the first thing that will happen?"

"The secretary of the governor or some prefect or mandarin will meet us and tell us where you are to remain."

"I'm not going to remain anywhere. We're going to Hong Kong."

"That may be. We have only orders to go with you to the governor. He must decree the rest, but however that may be, you must sleep somewhere."

"Will he try to tuck us into such a hole as that fellow did last night?"

"Who can tell. He is the governor. We are not."

"Have n't you any good hotels in China?"

"They are all good and they are all bad. The lion would find hard comfort in the eagle's nest. The eagle would die in a lion's den."

"Just so. I call these hotels simply horrible; but I don't know whether I'm the lion or the eagle. I'd like to be either one for an hour or two, and I would n't trouble either you or the governor. I'd just start off for Hong Kong. But suppose he sends us to some place where we can stay, and we don't have to stir him up till morning, what will happen then?"

"Possibly he will visit you. Possibly he will send other mandarins. Who can tell?"

"But I want to see the man himself, and I will see him."

"In that case, you must send a note to him, saying, 'Your younger brother from the land of the western seas has come to bow his head to the ground before you, and offer you

his respect.' You know, yourself, if your dignity is great, as it surely is, you may write it in very large letters."

"I would n't write any such thing at all. I'm an American. Do you suppose I'd bow my head to the ground to any mortal on earth? Not much."

"It means nothing. It is simply something which must be said. It stands written in the Book of Rites."

"I'd just say, 'Two shipwrecked Americans have come to town, and are going to call on you.' But what then?"

"That would be hard to say, for such a letter would be most unusual, surprising, and contrary to all politeness."

"Well, if I fixed it up to please him, what would he do?"

"If he would see you, he would reply, 'It will give me pleasure. I beg you come.'"

"And if not?"

"I am obliged. I thank you for the trouble you propose to take."

"That's polite enough, I'm sure. But suppose we went round without sending a note?"

"He would have a servant tell you that he was combing his hair, and keep you waiting an hour or two."

"Guess I'll send a note. And when we reach the house, what then?"

"He will meet you at the gate, perhaps, and possibly he in person will bid you enter."

By many questions Scott obtained a very fair idea of what was expected of him when he should go before the governor, and what he should find there; in fact, a chapter from the Book of Rites. In brief it was this: In the room for receiving guests there would be two lines of seats, one in front of the other. When the Chinese guest, at least, arrives, he begins at one end

of this line and literally bows himself to the other. In the South of China the south line is the most honorable, in the North, it is exactly opposite. The guest keeps on bowing till his hands that are clasped in front of him actually touch the floor. Of course the host insists upon the guest taking the seat at the South in the city of Kweilin, and of course the guest continually refuses. When they reach the end of the lines of seats and the end of their polite sentences, it is sometimes the guest, sometimes the host, who finds himself in the seat of honor, which he takes with modest submission, remarking, "We are observing the customs of the North." "Pe le" is what he really says, which of course reverses the whole, and makes his seat the most humble, after all. To this, of course, the other must reply, "Nan le," or "The custom of the South," which turns it all back again.

Then if the master of the house have friends present, the bows must all be repeated just as often as there are friends. All of this takes up no little time, and nothing else is ever said or done till this is accomplished. But why not? The Chinese always have time enough. It is the one thing with which all the Chinese are abundantly supplied.

If the master of the house would be very polite, he covers the chair with a little mat, or pretends to wipe it with his silk robe, and if the guest would be very polite, he even bows to the chair before he sits down in it.

So soon as this ceremony is completed, the servants bring in the tea. The guest takes the cup in both hands, no matter how hot it is, and bows very low. Then he drinks the tea in many little sips, and, bowing again, he sets down the cup.

Then the host takes his fan from the depths of his sleeve, bows to his guests, and begins to use it. They all follow his

example, and it would be very rude not to carry a fan. After all this the conversation begins, but begins upon the most indifferent subjects. Business before pleasure would be the very height of rudeness, and it is quite customary to make a call of an hour or more, and then in two minutes, as one rises to leave, tell all the important matter upon which he came.



A CITY WALL.

Going out is almost as hard as coming in. Very ridiculous it may seem, yet it is prescribed politeness, and indeed it is much easier to be polite in China than anywhere else in the world, for it is all written in the Book of Rites. Every one knows precisely what to do himself and precisely what every one else will do, and what could be easier?

As the party left the town when the sun was a little beyond the meridian, Scott noticed, as he often had before, that here and there along the streets, and along every street, there were high brick walls. The houses were very low, almost all of

them made of wood, with oiled paper screens, often for the front wall on the street; screens that were drawn through the day, transforming the front of the house into a shop. The brick walls extended between the houses, here and there, not more than twenty rods apart, but seemed to have nothing in the world to do with them or with anything else, though they rose even higher than the roofs.

"What are they for?" asked Scott.

"They are fire walls," replied the mandarin, "to fence in a fire and keep it from spreading over the whole town."

"Have you no fire-engines?"

"We have water dragons, and good ones, and when a single hut along the road is burning we can use the water dragons and put it out, but when a whole street begins to blaze what can we do? We are not spirits that we may walk through flames and not be burned. When one house in the square catches fire, all between two fire walls must burn. It would be very absurd to try to stop it. Besides, there would not be water enough. We take our water dragons to the fire walls and there we fight the flames, to prevent their going farther. It is cooler behind the wall."

"What do the people do who live between the walls when a fire breaks out?"

"They fight the thieves."

"Fight the thieves? What does that mean?"

"Why every one becomes a thief when the city is on fire," replied the mandarin, and in a sense he was correct, though he had doubtless been burned out once or twice and in his personal losses become prejudiced against the whole community, which was quite natural. It is surely a fact that when a fire does break out the people dread the robbers more than they do

the flames, for it is agreed at once that the house itself must burn, and they accept that fact, but it is always uncertain just how much of its contents they can save from the greed of the lawless crowd, such as even in America patronizes a fire for its own profit, and hence their anxiety.

The moment the flames are extinguished, however, the work of rebuilding commences. They have a curious custom, too, of carting the charred embers and the mass of debris from the land where they would build, and leaving it in a huge mound upon the ruins of the house where the fire broke out. To transport the entire collection that is left in the burnt district beyond the limits of the town falls thus to the lot of the man whose carelessness was the cause of it all. It is his punishment. This house is usually the last to be rebuilt, and often the poor owner becomes so thoroughly discouraged over the mountain of work that rises higher and higher before him that he gives up in despair and goes somewhere else, so that not unfrequently one will see memorial mounds of past conflagrations rising grimly in different quarters of the town, some of them even overgrown with shrubs and grass, where nature is struggling to improve the grim spectacle.

"I should think a man would go to law about it, and stop people covering up his land that way, if the fire were not his fault," said Scott.

The mandarin shrugged his shoulders. "Who should go to law?" he said, grimly shaking his head. "He who would suffer." Evidently he himself had suffered in going to law, which was the very best reason in the world for the opinion he expressed, yet it is very true that the majority who resort to law in China suffer just as the majority who resort to law anywhere else, and perhaps the number is even greater there. It



LOOKING THROUGH THE GATE.

is intended, at least, that it should be. Years ago, many of the unfortunate victims of the courts petitioned their great father and mother on the throne at Peking to relieve them and modify the ferocity of the arm that defended them. The reply was full of philosophy, at least. It said, "The Emperor is of the opinion that lawsuits would tend to increase frightfully if people were not afraid of the tribunals, and if they were always sure of finding there only ready and perfect justice. For man is very apt to delude himself concerning his own interests, and contests would become so interminable that a half of all China would not be enough to settle the disputes of the other half. I therefore declare that all who resort to law shall be treated without mercy, till they become disgusted with it and tremble at the thought of going before a magistrate. Then good people will not go to courts and bad people will be ruined by them, as they justly deserve to be."

As the little caravan drew nearer to the capital, the buildings in the surrounding villages became more solid and substantial. The houses were oftener built of stone or brick, and the floors, which in poorer huts were nothing but beaten earth, were now laid in cement. There was lattice-work in the windows, upon which the oiled paper was pasted, and the homes of the most wealthy were completely surrounded by high walls, shutting them entirely from the streets. They were sometimes very elaborate, and even the walls were ornamented with carved woodwork. These houses are always composed of several different buildings separated by open courts, in which there are often beautiful gardens.

Then as the roads became better and more frequented, and the works of man became more beautiful, man himself became both better and worse. Beggars began to appear by

the waysides. Old men and women extended tremulous and withered hands, asking for alms, and their thin lips pitifully murmured, "Do good deeds," or muttered, "May you live a hundred years," while sightless and horribly sunken eyes were upturned for charity, and swollen limbs and frightful diseases, that made one's heart ache, forced themselves before the eyes of the strangers.

There were fortune-tellers, too, along the road, with many devices for discovering the future. One that particularly attracted Scott was a man with a little cage hanging about his neck, in which a bird was singing. When some one asked him for a fortune he sat upon the ground, set down the cage, threw some bits of paper about it, upon which sentences were written, and then opened the



FORTUNE-TELLER.

door of the cage. The bird came out, looked about him for a moment, picked up one of the pieces of paper, and with it went back into the cage. The sentence written upon it was then explained by the fortune-teller in a way to suit the circumstances, and the fortune was told.

They passed a woman at the door of a pagoda, burning a pile of what seemed to be silver dollars, but was, in reality, only thick paper covered with tinsel. The god to whom she made the sacrifice would not know the difference.

"What's the matter with her?" Scott asked the mandarin.

"She is sending treasure beyond the grave," he replied.

"When you die your spirit will go somewhere, and may remain

there for ages before it comes back to inhabit another body. When you wander in that land and wish to cross a bridge you must pay a toll. When you cross a ferry you must fee the



AN OLD FORTUNE TELLER.

ferryman. If you wish to be well treated at the inns you must pay well for it. The priests have sold that woman *tieh*, which will be money waiting for her there after she has burned it."



A WOMAN PRAYING.

"Guess if that sort of thing would go in America my father'd have a small fortune," said Scott, "for once a month, down at the bank, they burn up a bushel-basket full of worn-out bills."

The bearers stopped to rest beside the pagoda and Scott went into the temple. Workmen were on every side, repairing the floor, and the endless array of idols against the walls and the great idols at the gate and by the altar were covered with cloth, and white paper was pasted over their eyes. It was a curious sight, but in reality it was only a polite invitation for the gods they represented to withdraw for the time, that they might not be offended by the dust and noise.

"There are never very many people in these temples," said Scott. "Don't you have any Sundays, when every one goes to church?"

This was something that Tao-sen found it hard to translate, but comprehending as well as he might, the mandarin quoted an old Chinese proverb:—

"The prison doors are always closed, yet the prisons are always full. The temples are open day and night, but there is no one in them."

Paul looked up and asked, "Scott, isn't it most time for us to have a Sunday?"

It suddenly occurred to Scott, that from the night of the wreck of the "Tigress" he had not once thought of the flight of time; each day had been like every other. It must have been nearly three weeks since they were taken on board the fishing junk. Three weeks without a Sunday! And when would another Sunday come? In the cottage at Beverly Farms that old injunction to "remember the Sabbath day and

keep it holy" was a law that was obeyed almost by instinct, but it was not so much a terror as it was a joy.

"I don't know what day it is, Paul?" Scott replied; "but I think it would n't be far out of the way if we had a Sunday to-morrow, if we get into a place in Kweilin where we can keep quiet."

"All right! Let's do it!" cried Paul, eagerly grasping his brother's hands.



A GLOOMY PROSPECT.

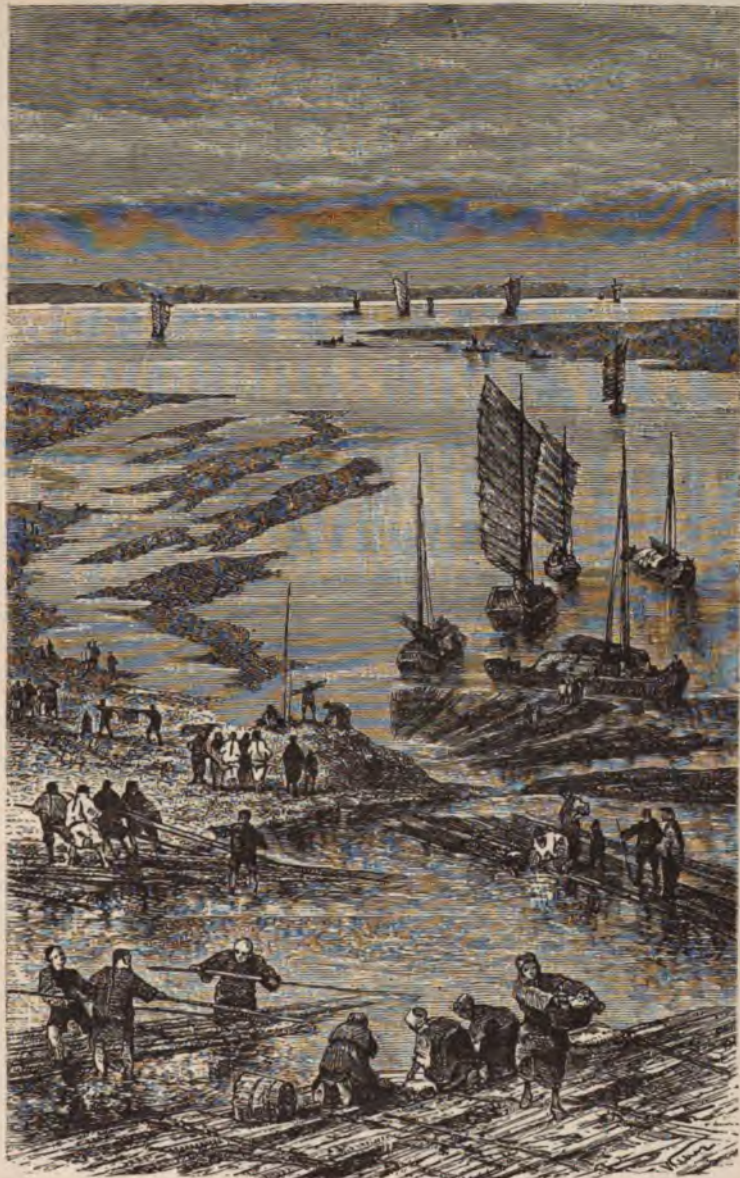
CHAPTER XV.

HAVING SUNDAY AT KWEILIN.

IT was quite dark when the little caravan emerged upon a wharf, where low flat-boats and lighter fishing boats were crowded. The bearers ceased singing their "Hi-o-ho-o! hi-o-lo! ho-o-lo!" and set down the palanquins. Then there was a great rush of boatmen, all begrimed with dirt and smelling even more vile than the men of Wucheun, as they had to deal with fresh water instead of salt, and were more careful to keep out of it. A lake, neither very long nor very broad, but in a shape of a new moon, is all about Kweilin, and the capital of the province lies in the hollow of it.

Fortunately the boys were saved such a delay here as was necessary when they arrived at Wucheun, for the governor had been warned of their coming, and an official boat, well manned, was even then waiting, to take them instantly on board.

Arrangements can be carried out quickly enough, even in China, when government officials lay their hands to the wheel and choose to turn it rapidly. There was a crowd already gathered in the dusk, upon the wharf, and many colored lanterns already made the place bright with their dancing lights, for the very fact that the official junk was waiting there for some one was excuse enough for the people to wait, too, even though they did not know what they were waiting for. But before the astonished throng had risen to the occasion and fairly realized that the expected guests were not mandarins at all, but some-



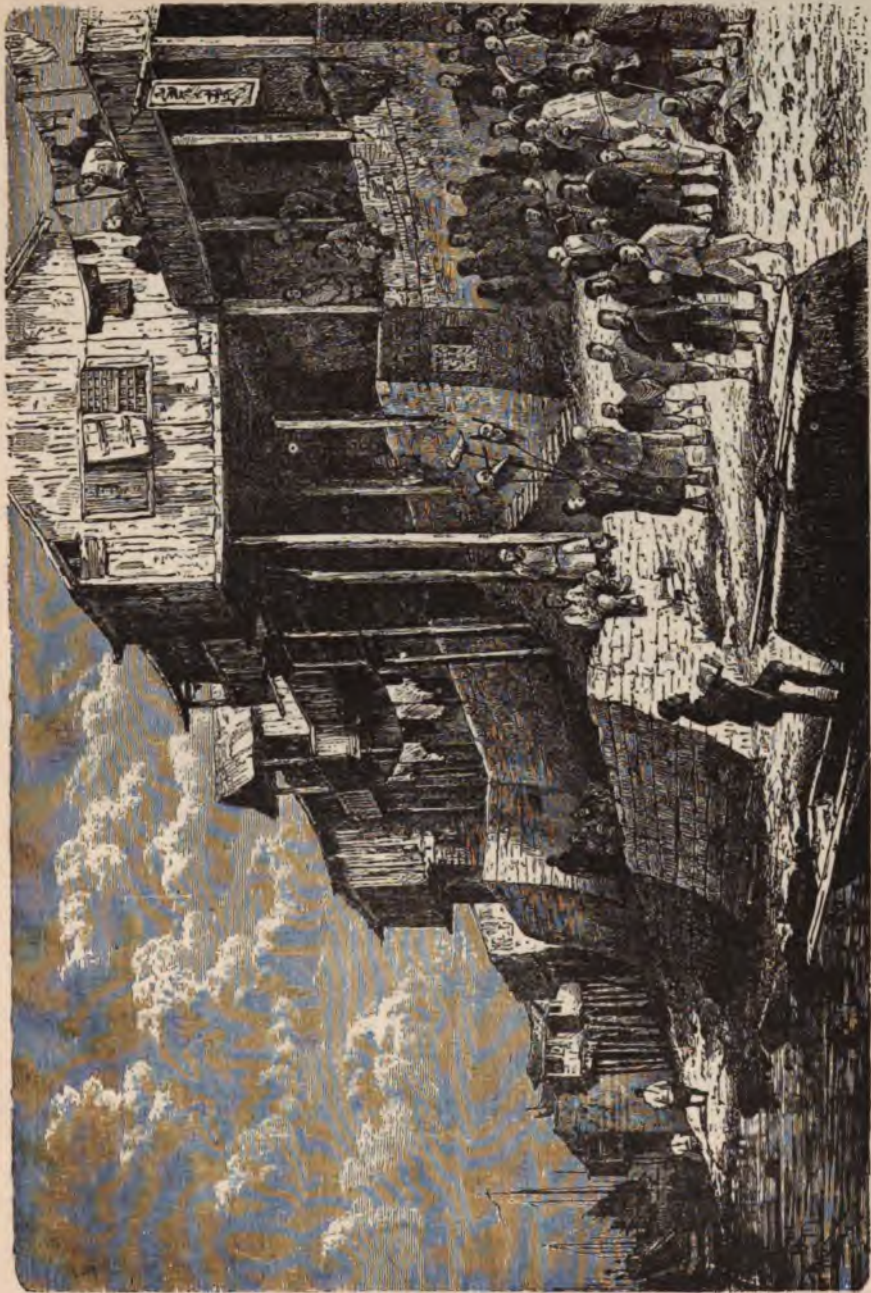
DOWN THE RIVER.

thing decidedly more wonderful, the boys had been hurried to the junk, the junk had been pushed from the wharf, and dark water was glistening wider and wider between them and the land, rippling in the silver moonlight and, like a mirror, reflecting the bright lanterns that were bobbing about upon the shore.

They had been hurried so fast, in fact, that even Scott had not had time to look about him or hardly to realize what was going on. Paul had been carried upon a strong, broad shoulder, reminding him a little of some of his rides with Dhondaram, only that now his fingers clung about a queue, to support him, instead of the unbraided, sacred lock of the Hindu muni. But now that the oarsmen were tugging and singing, and the bamboo sails were swelling, and the cries of the disappointed crowd were growing fainter and farther away from them, and the luxurious surroundings of wealth were on every hand, and only a few Chinese noblemen about them, with fine clothes and courtly politeness, they gathered their thoughts, and with that ready complacency of those who had become quite accustomed to change after change, and wonder after wonder, they stretched themselves comfortably, after the close quarters of the palanquin, and at once began to enjoy themselves.

The water splashed against the junk and the oars splashed in the water, and the boatmen sang their "Hi-o-ho-o! hi-o-lo! ho-o-lo!" as though it were one endless song, like an endless chain, that must keep up its twisting from Malacca to the Great Wall and back to Malacca, and never be dropped for an instant lest the two ends be lost.

Tao-sen alone was evidently not in his happiest mood. "What's the matter, Ling?" said Scott, giving his pigtail a little twitch.



THE CITY WHARVES.

"My tinkee my no more welly lucky boy," said Tao-sen, solemnly.

"Why, what's the row?" asked Scott.

"No blong low! He! he! Maskee! Winchee low! fus-late low! Here no low! Here nobody makee low. Welly solly! welly solly!"

The philosophy of Tao-sen's reasoning began to dawn upon Scott. He had not thought of it at first, but it was quite true that though every preparation had evidently been made to transport them comfortably and quietly into Kweilin, it was equally evident that their coming caused no great disturbance among the great authorities. Scott was very glad of this. He had been tormented with uncomfortable attention, and missed it only with pleasure. Tao-sen, on the contrary, was pleased with the amount of homage which had been paid to his young masters, and more than this, he naturally saw at once that there must be a cause for such an effect, and that evidently the little party was not considered of so much importance in Kweilin as it had been at Wucheun. Had Scott realized the full force of this he would doubtless have been more anxious, for it certainly indicated more difficulty before him in carrying out his own desires.

Instead of being surrounded by officials, anxious to answer his slightest questions and give him all the information he desired, he found that he must go himself to the men in fine clothes, who were comfortably seated in the close cabin, smoking their little pipes, drinking tea, and munching melon-seeds, and paying no more attention to him than if he had been but a box of merchandise which they were transporting to the governor.

As they neared the wharf it was evident that even less of a

commotion awaited them; a score or more of ordinary lanterns were visible, borne by as many loungers, drawn there by the bright lights on the mandarin's junk; but that was all. The escort which had come from Wucheun did not cross the lake, for its work was done when its charge was handed over to the



FISHING BOAT ON THE LAKE.

officers of the governor; but selecting the one who seemed to direct affairs, Scott asked where they were going when they landed.

"To the communal palace," was the brief reply. And to the communal palace they went, as quickly and quietly as they had come on board the junk.

At the name of this destination Tao-sen brightened a little, for the communal palace is, at least, the place where the most honorable public guests are entertained at public expense. But this particular communal palace was very large, and the

rooms into which the boys were ushered, as their distinctive apartments, were very small, and not by any means in the most elaborate or in the grandest part of the house.

To describe this communal palace would be just as impossible as to describe a Chinaman. Every city of importance in all China has one, and most of them are elaborate, and, to Chinese eyes, gorgeous. They are a sort of royal inn, where mandarins, travelling upon official business, are entertained from the public treasury; and upon the advent of a very great man, one to whom it is impossible to show too great reverence, they sometimes present such scenes of brilliancy as could hardly be expressed in words. But no extraordinary flourish greeted these strangers. No dazzling array of lanterns over the great gate wrought out in letters of light the names of the honored visitors. No triumphal arch of flowers, with many a sacred lotos interspersed, made the air heavy with fragrance for the two. No broad strips of yellow silk, with characters carefully painted upon them, lined the path, extolling the two who were to pass over it; telling of hundreds of noble deeds which they had done, or which they were credited with having done, without ever having done them at all. All of these things, and many more, appear at times, but not this time, for, evidently, the visitors were not considered of sufficient importance. A few servants appeared to welcome them, but Scott felt sure it was more out of respect to their escort, after all, for when they were safely placed in their quarters, and those who seemed to have a right had looked at them and touched their cheeks, they left them alone, with only a single servant, whose duty it seemed to do everything.

This servant first proceeded to bring in their supper. Scott was so hungry that he could easily have grumbled at its being



HUMBLE HUTS.

very inferior to the food to which they were accustomed; but Paul, on the other hand, was so sleepy that he hardly knew what he ate, and at once rolled himself up in the little bed prepared for him. Thus the little interpreter was out of reach, for Paul had even learned so much of the Chinese that he could talk quite as well as Tao-sen in English. But as Scott and Tao-sen were left alone together, and as they had now a mutual burden on their minds, they resolved to make the best of it and enter into conversation.

"No low, no fus-late eatee, sittee, sleepee. Big Cheenaman makee fuss, leetle Cheenaman makee fuss allee same. Jus now nobody makee fuss. No good. My no blong welly lucky boy."

"It'll be all right for to-morrow, Ling," said Scott. "We must be very quiet to-morrow. We're going to keep it for Sunday. We don't want to see the governor to-morrow or have any one come to see us, but the next day we'll make a fuss ourselves."

"To-morrow! to-morrow! Whatee blong to-morrow?"

"We're going to have it for Sunday. Don't you know what Sunday is?"

"Allee same stimmer 'Tigress,' talkee joss?" asked Tao-sen.

"That's it," said Scott. "You must tell these people that we don't want to see anybody to-morrow."

"Maskee! must litee letter boss Cheenaman, talkee he no come to-morrow," said Tao-sen, decidedly, thinking, with a grin from ear to ear, that it would be a delightful little piece of independence to write to the great governor of Kweilin that he was not wanted there, after the cool way in which he had received them.

The servant was found and a man who could write was summoned. The letter was written and despatched all after Tao-

sen's ideas, which were much more aglow with the importance of absolute quiet about the communal palace, upon that coming day, than Scott could have thought wise had he comprehended the full tenor of what Tao-sen directed the scribe to write. Indeed, it was a thoroughly dictatorial letter, for no one so much as a Chinaman delights in commanding his superiors, in a quiet, determined way, when he has the opportunity. It closed by stating that the Americans would call upon the governor at his palace on the day after.

One might think that such a letter would have enraged the great head of one of the eighteen provinces, and so it did. It made him so angry, for a time, that he thought of turning the boys into the street to care for themselves, but Tao-sen's instinct was a good prophet, and in the end the governor began to think that his guests were of some importance, after all. He not only replied to the letter that their wishes should be respected for the next day, and that a call from them the day after would be a great honor to his miserable home, but he directed that on their Sunday evening there should be all sorts of fireworks in the court of the communal palace, and music and drums and priests from the nearest temple to aid them in making as much racket as possible, which was quite in accordance with all the rites and with the most refined and educated notions of what a quiet Sunday should be.

Paul was sleeping soundly when Scott opened his eyes the next morning to discover the bright sunlight streaming through the paper windows, and lighting here and there upon bright stripes of silk and paper and very highly colored tapestry. He pushed back the paper screens and looked out over the beautiful green country beyond the city, and a corner of the half-moon lake flashing in the early morning. Scott could scarcely real-

ize that this was China. It was precisely what a New England Sunday should have been. Soon, however, he was suddenly recalled by the sharp snapping of several bunches of fire-crackers, which Tao-sen and the servant were setting off in the court, to hail the advent of the strangers' sacred holiday. The noise roused Paul, and sitting up in bed he began vigorously rubbing his eyes.

"This is to be our Sunday, you know," said Scott.

"Oh, yes! I remember now," replied Paul. "I was thinking at first it was Fourth of July."

And how did they spend Sunday? Why, as nearly as possible as they would have spent it at home, for an hour or two, at least. They had no Bible, but Scott told Bible stories and they tried to sing. But Scott soon discovered that both he and Paul were growing very homesick, and that the ivy-grown cottage among the pines, on the distant sea-coast, was so much brighter and dearer by contrast, when brought so near to them, as while they were trying to have a Sunday at Kweilin, that their present surroundings were becoming unbearable. It was surely best to change the subject.

"How bright the sun shines!" he said.

"Yes, but it casts pretty black shadows," replied Paul, looking over the floor.

"The sun does not cast the shadow," said Scott. "It is the chair there which does that."

"And if there was n't any chair there would n't be a shadow any more," Paul added to the philosophy, and to prove it he struck the chair with his foot, pushing it out of the way, and continued, "I wish there were no chairs in the way." This he said sadly, and Scott hurried to add, —

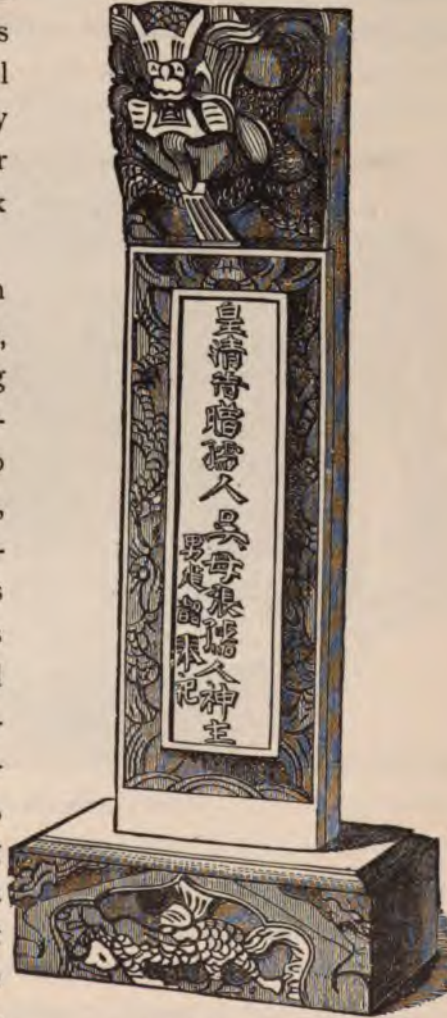
"But, Paul, the sunlight does not look so bright now, and if

there were nothing at all to cast shadows we should not realize that it was bright at all."

Scott saw that he had struck upon a subject that was not just what he wanted. The inclination of Paul's mind was to something too thoughtful and serious, and he must try for something even brighter than the sunshine to talk about.

Tao-sen had been sitting on the floor, a silent audience, with open mouth, watching the curious sort of temple service, which was going on so quietly in the little room, without any joss-papers or fire-crackers or ancestral tablets or praying-sticks or bonbons or sacrifices or idols. He had caught some parts of the conversation, however, and realized that some of the service, at least, consisted in telling stories, with something of a moral tendency, and now that there came a pause he at once applied for an opportunity to take a part.

"Maskee!" said he, with a curious grunt and that inevitable smile which Bert Harte thought so childlike and bland.



AN ANCESTRAL TABLET.

“ Master winchee my talkee, too? Belly good talkee. Stolee two Cheenaman.”

Scott had not time to inquire into the nature of the story when Paul, clapping his hands and forgetting his sadder thoughts, demanded that the story begin at once, and Tao-sen,



ANCESTRAL HALL.

with appropriate dignity, as about to take part in a religious ceremony, quietly left the room for a moment, remarking, —

“ My catchee picture, talkee allee same ear and eye.”

He returned at once, bringing a series of bright pictures in gorgeous colors, red and yellow, blue and green, colors which artists in other countries have tried in vain to imitate, either in depth or brilliancy. The pictures were grotesque, and in other

ways of little value, perhaps, yet they had some merit, and why not?

If Chinese art is utterly without value, why is it that so much is paid for Chinese porcelains and screens in America?

The specialty of wonderful coloring, in which they almost hold unrivalled power, is a curious championship, when we notice how impossible it is for them to mix colors and blend their beautiful and brilliant lines in neutral tints; yet, after all, it is a very natural result, and produced by the very same cause which brought about that very skill in making the colors themselves.

The various great dynasties of China, following one after the other, were not distinguished by crests and coats of arms, as the imperial families of France or England, but by colors.

The imperial color was blue or red or yellow or green, and which ever it was, the talent of all artistic China was turned into one endeavor to produce that color, the deepest, richest, and most beautiful, and he who succeeded was honored above all the artists, and continually employed in making his color and teaching others how to make it, for dyes and paints, till at last, of necessity, it reached almost perfection. Then another dynasty would rise and another color would rise with it, but the dynasties were not blended, and no more were the colors.



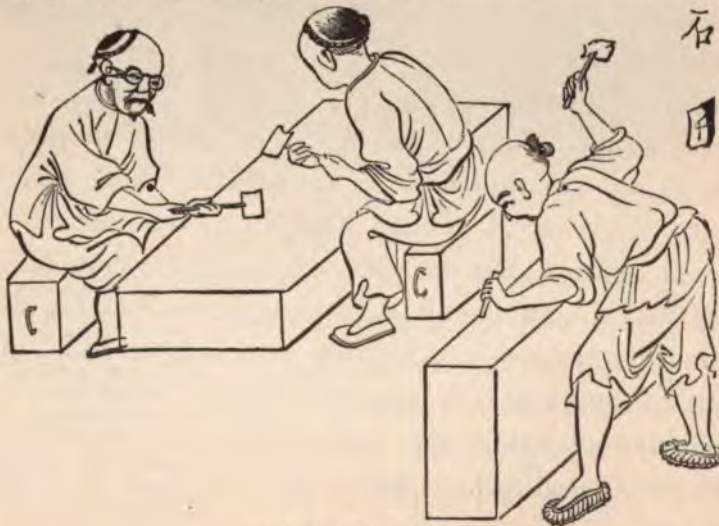
WORSHIPPING TABLETS.



CHINESE ART.

Art is not at such a high standard of excellence in China, to-day, as it was a century or more ago, any more than we have Raphaels and Angelos every day, in Europe. It was only a few generations ago in China, however, that almost as great rewards were offered for excellence in art as for excellence in scholarship. One who could paint or weave or mould anything better than any one else was sure to receive the highest positions as such in the royal palace at Peking. Every inducement was offered for men who chose to try. When any one, no matter who or where he lived, produced anything remarkable, he had but to take it to the prefect of the town,

and the prefect was obliged to let it stand in the main court of



MASONS AT WORK.

his mansion for a month, with a full description of the work. This opened the matter for criticism and competition. During the month every one could find fault with it, and any one could bring what he chose to rival it. Competent judges were chosen for each, and if critics and competitors failed, the artist was sent with his work, at public expense, and presented to the governor. Then the value of his work was again tested, and if still found to be superior, he was sent with it to Peking, to receive the honors which the Emperor chose to bestow.

A peasant from the country once brought to the prefect's house a beautiful piece of tapestry which he had wrought with his own hands. A sparrow sat upon an ear

of barley. It was so perfect and so beautiful that every one spoke in praise of it. No one found fault with it till the very last day, when a hunchback came and stood before it, and sent word to the prefect that he had a criticism. "The bird is a perfect bird," said he, "and the barley is as like to barley as the real article; but who ever saw a sparrow sit upon a barley ear without bending the stem? That stem is straight." The committee listened to the criticism, and the artist could not refute it.



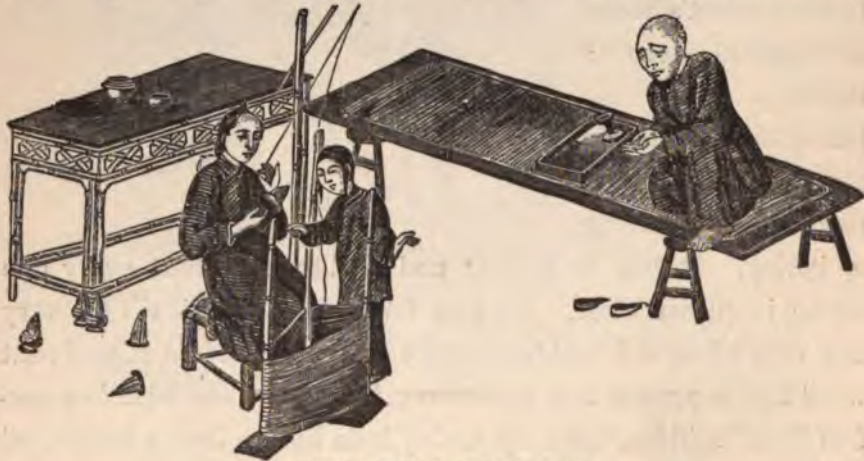
NATIVE ARTIST.

The pictures which Tao-sen brought with him were none of them remarkable extravagances of art, however, but simply very brilliant and very simple figures on rice paper, such as



CHINESE WORKMEN.

are made by thousands in Canton, and sold there for four cents apiece, to be brought to America and retailed at fifty



HOME SCENE IN LOW LIFE.

cents and a dollar. In fact, Tao-sen only proposed for his Sunday-afternoon story to follow the example of some of our

own countrymen of nowadays, who are unable to put words together in such beauty and force as will describe to their hearers the beautiful and grand things which one sees in the world, and are obliged to call pictures of those places to their aid, to help them out. In short, Tao-sen was about to give an illustrated lecture.

In the very bad English which he spoke, it would be quite impossible for any one less well acquainted with him than Scott and Paul to understand what he was saying, but in the main this was his story:—

A CHINAMAN WITH THREE TAILS.

“There were once two men in China who were the very best of friends. Nothing could part them; day and night they were together. Neither of them did anything for himself which the other could do for him. Each gave the best of everything to the other. Either would have died for the other. They were like one man with two heads, and at last one said, ‘That we may be even closer to each other, and never part for an instant, let us tie our queues together in a knot which cannot be untied.’ The other thought this a very bright idea, and they spent the whole day in twisting and binding the ends of their pigtails, with wax and sand, into a knot which could not separate. Then to make it doubly sure they sealed it with the best cement. For a while they were as happy as happy could be;



they had longed for just this, something which should unite them so that nothing could ever separate them. They petted each other, and walked about with their heads close together and their arms about each other. But before long they began to walk a little farther apart. Now that it was impossible for them to have two opinions and each to follow his own, it began to be a little harder for them always to give up. When one wanted to go one way and the other wanted to go the other, which was quite *impossible* for them to do, it became a matter of strength in insisting more than of generosity in giving up, as to which way they should go, and sometimes their



tails got a hard pull before the question was settled. This went on till one day they could stand it no longer, and each one turned about and doubled up his fists. But each time one struck the other dodged, and in drawing back his head he gave both queues such a twitch that each man's head was hurt more than either would have been by a blow. This did not work well, and they had to give it up. Then they tried to untie the knot. This could not be done, and even if it could have been done they would not have succeeded in doing it, for no sooner did one of them take hold of the knot and begin to work upon it than the other became angry with the way he was doing it, and snatched it away, and again and again they came to blows. Then some one said, 'Cut the queue'; but when they tried to settle it this way, neither was willing to have the double pigtail cut on his side of the knot. The men who had always given the best of everything to each other were ready to fight to the

death before they would sacrifice the half of one hair on the tip of their queues for the other. At last, however, they did agree to turn about and each one pull away with all his might. But they only agreed to this because each one felt sure that he should hurt the other more than he hurt himself, and that he should come out best



in the end. They agreed to pull and pull, and pull for life; to pull till something, somewhere, snapped. Then they began, and the harder they pulled and the more it hurt the madder they became and pulled so much the harder, till at last one queue did part, close to the man's head, and in all China there was only one man who was happier than the man who had lost his pigtail and gained his freedom."



"Who was that man?" asked Paul.

"Datee he fella hab two pigtail," replied Tao-sen, laughing.

"But look here, Ling," said Scott, "you said the story was about a Chinaman with three tails."

"Welly well," replied Tao-sen. "Datee fus pigtail, blong one. Datee nodder man pigtail, no come untie, datee two. Just now my talkee nodder tale, allee same man, datee blong tlee. He! he! you no sabbee?"

Scott was very willing to give up the argument, but unfortunately, in Tao-sen's little joke, at the end, he quite overlooked one of the most profound morals which was ever deduced either in China or America, a moral which the wisest men are

not wise enough to be warned by, and which fools are foolish enough to stumble over, a moral which always has been and always will be true, and which may be drawn from more tales of sorrow and suffering in real life than all other morals put together. And if Tao-sen were only here he would add to this his usual inquiry, "You no sabbee?"

The sun had hardly set when the fire-works began, and the usual din of a great religious celebration. At first Paul objected to this, it seemed so very incongruous, even with their frail efforts to have a Sunday at Kweilin.

"But, Paul," said Scott, "you know it's their custom here. They are doing it out of politeness. They are trying to help us on, and then, Paul, you know we are not at all sure that this is really Sunday, after all. We only guessed at it."

Paul thought it over for a time and came to the conclusion that it made a deal of difference where one was, just what kind of a Sunday he could have.

CHAPTER XVI.

QUEER THINGS ABOUT KWEILIN.

WHILE the fire-works were in progress an old blind fortune-teller made his way up to the platform where the boys were seated, preceded by a boy playing on what seemed to be a banjo. Scott thought he had heard finer music. When told that he stood before the strangers, the blind man fell upon his knees and demanded that they allow him to tell their fortunes. It was a novel experience, and though the blind man was far from attractive in his personal appearance, Scott held out his hand and bade him go ahead. He had forgotten that as the man was blind he could surely make no use of a hand to help him in reading the future.



THE FORTUNE-TELLER.

The old man rubbed his shaven head for a moment and then began to sing. Singing was what he called it, and the boy who played the banjo thought he was singing, too, for he kept up his playing as though helping him along, but Scott was

very sure that if, even in China, it could be called singing and playing, the old man was singing one tune while the boy was playing quite another. But it made no difference. They went on very well together, and Tao-sen picked out the most important points and translated them. This was the fortune: —

“Two young and noble sirs from a far country to the great middle kingdom. The skies were bright above them, but a cloud rose. The cloud was black and full of dragons. The god of thunder rides upon the dragon's back. The Chinese will not harm the stranger who is helpless, but he who comes with a spear in his hand shall have what he deserves. The noble sirs shall live long among the flowers of the land under heaven. They shall eat rice and be filled with spices and happiness. They shall meet the dragon. The dragon will please them with his bright color. They will think him a friend. They will sit upon his jaws and laugh, for they will not know him. He will close his jaws and eat their arms. Then they will open their eyes and see. But their legs will be left them, and thus they will run from him. If they run fast they will escape, for the middle kingdom is kind to the stranger who comes to it helpless.”

There the old man stopped, and when Tao-sen had given him a few cash, less than a cent, he went away satisfied.

Scott laughed at the fortune, but Tao-sen grew very grave and very much inclined to fear for the future and to wonder where the dragon was coming from who was to bite off his master's arms.

Then came a professional minstrel and sang one of the old Chinese ballads, while he played for himself, and in that way kept the instrument and his voice a little more in harmony.

This was the song he sang:—

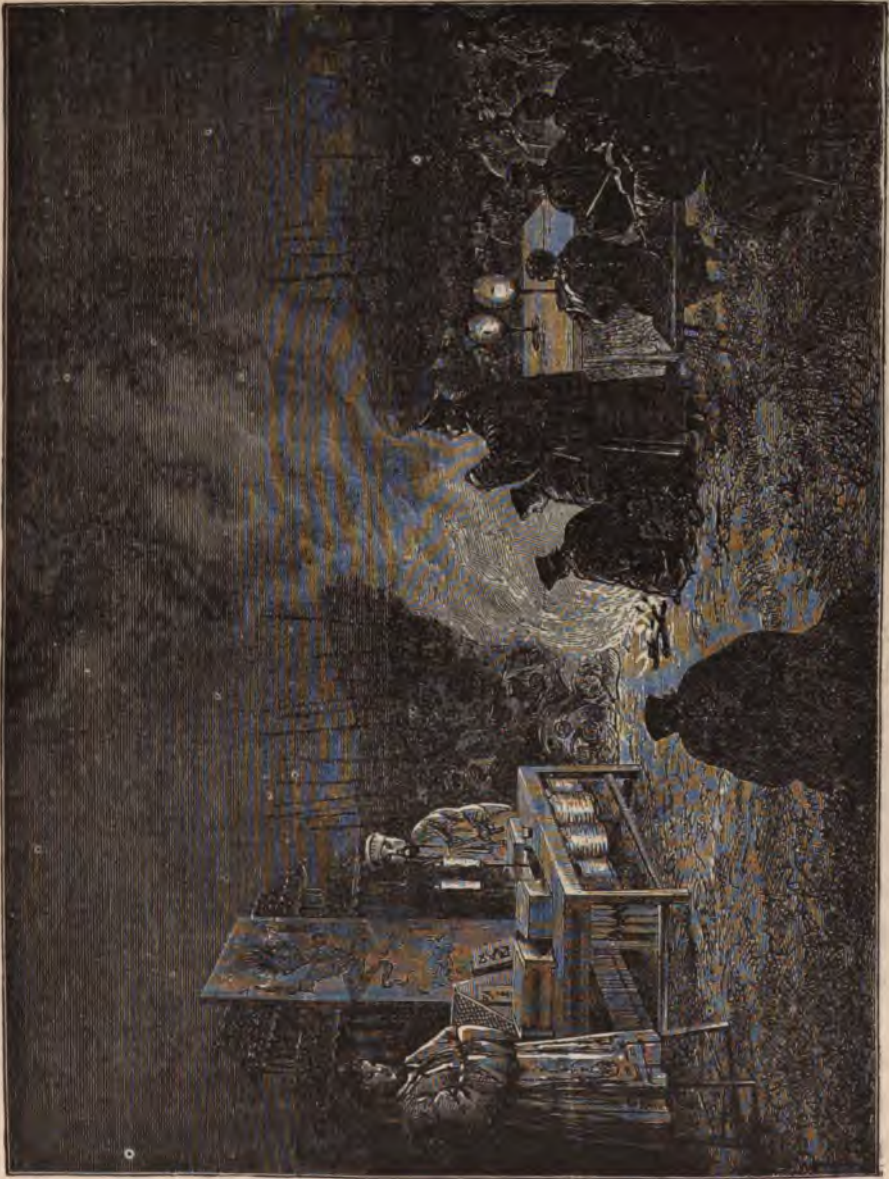
“When a man has worked all day he is hungry ;
 When he has eaten enough, still he is naked ;
 When he has fine clothes he longs for a wife ;
 When he is well married he wants a fine palanquin ;
 When he has horses and mules and bearers unnumbered he must have more land.
 With thousands of fields he is restless without official dignity.
 He obtains the seventh rank, but that is too low,
 So are all the rest, till he reaches the first in the Empire.
 Then nothing will satisfy him but to become the Emperor.
 He sits upon the throne as Son of Heaven. But he must die.
 Foolish man ! His longings know no end.
 The coffin covers him. His name is Discontent.”

“That’s not so bad,” said Scott. “Guess the first cousin of that man settled in America.”

The evening’s celebration drew to a close with a theatrical performance. A theatre! Precisely. It is one of the most common of all common things in China. There are buildings for this purpose, but they are quite unnecessary. A very few minutes is long enough to prepare a stage, and any street that is wide enough or any open square or court is just the place for it. It is really a religious ceremony, for there is always an idol, large or small, upon the stage, to which the play is performed as a propitiatory offering, but the actors pay very little attention to the idol. They play to please the people, and why not? Even the most ignorant and bigoted of them know that it is the people and not the idols who pay the bills. Sometimes a family or group of neighbors will have a stage erected on some open lot near their houses, and contract with some company for a certain number of hours or days, just as some people in other countries have a library built in their magnificent mansions and then contract with a bookseller for the

appropriate number of square feet of books. If all the streets in the town are narrow and there are no open lots, the stage is built directly across the principal street, so that the people can pass under it. It is a very popular form of advertisement even, for when a dealer wants to draw a crowd to his shop he has but to hire a theatrical company to set up their stage in his neighborhood. The parties who pay the actors invite their friends to occupy seats reserved for them, but any one who carries his own camp chair, or is willing to stand up, can attend a theatre every day of his life, if he wishes, without ever opening his pocket-book. Paying for a performance of some play is often a sacrifice or thank-offering to some god or other, in the fulfilment of a vow. When a city is on fire, for instance, one will often see house-owners flat upon their faces in the street, instead of trying to put out the fire, offering hours or even days of uninterrupted drama to the fire god if he will kindly turn one side when he reaches their particular mansions and burn up their neighbors' property instead of their own. If they find no other excuse for a theatrical performance, they secure one in advance, to ward off any unseen evil which may be coming in the future.

There are all sorts of plays put upon the stage, from the deepest tragedy to the lightest comedy. Some of the historical dramas require years to reach the last act, and there are some being acted to-day, in China, which began no one knows when, it was so long ago, and certainly no one knows when they will end, for act after act is being written by the great historians of the nation, and they are still very far ahead of the actors. The actors recite their parts in a high, squeaking voice, which is considered quite the high art of the stage.



A NIGHT PERFORMANCE.

The play which was performed for the benefit of our boys however, was very short, for the governor had not expended any very elaborate sum of money for their benefit; but short as it was, it was very dry after they had laughed at the grotesque costumes and absurd antics for a few minutes, and Paul was half asleep when it suddenly came to an end in a *puppet-show*. And were ever a boy's eyes so tightly sealed, in Europe or America, that they would not open bright and wide to see a puppet-show? There was no mistaking it. It was just as much a puppet-show as was ever laughed at in England or Paris, or ever drew a crowd on the Boston Common. It was the same thing; neither more nor less, and a very good puppet-show, too. The little Punch and Judy were Chinese. That was all the difference.

The noise in the court had scarcely subsided when the boys were fast asleep in China, dreaming of fire-works and puppet shows and the pine beach at Beverly. But early in the morning they were on the alert again, ready now for the queer sights about Kweilin and to make a fuss for themselves if the governor failed to satisfy Tao-sen's ideas of what was right. After breakfast they engaged a palanquin to take them through the city, for Tao-sen declared that it would not be in conformity with the rites to go too early to the governor's palace.

At the gate of the communal palace, as they went out, they noticed a curious individual, sitting in a pliant little chair, under the shadow of an enormous umbrella. On a broad table before him such a curious collection was spread out that Scott instinctively asked about him.

"He is a doctor," said Tao-sen. "Those are his medicines." There were roots, herbs, and bones; the skull of a tiger, the

skeleton of a monkey, the skin of a viper. There were goats' hoofs, dried-up bats, and bears' paws.

"Great Cæsar!" muttered Scott, as he looked over the array. "And what are those things there?" he asked, pointing to a collection of curious contrivances at one corner.

"Those are his surgical instruments," Tao-sen answered, through Paul. "He is a very great doctor."



THE DOCTOR.

"I should rather think so," Scott replied, as he examined the rusty needles and wooden cupping glasses.

The doctor looked up over his spectacles and asked with professional frankness which of the remedies Scott required.

"Nothing, thank you," he replied; "I'm not at all ill to-day, and if I were, I'd rather be excused."

Ill? Sick? He had not thought of that before. What if he should fall ill, there, far away from everything dear to him?

what would become of Paul? Ill? What if Paul should be ill? He had not thought of that. He looked anxiously at his brother, who was sitting in the palanquin beside him. Paul's cheeks were not so rosy as they had been a month before. He had not eaten so heartily as usual for a few days. He was pale. He had not laughed so much. Scott's heart went down like lead. Why had he not noticed it before, and what if he had

挑



"WATER."

noticed it, what could he have done. But surely Paul was not ill. Scott tried to laugh at himself for the thought.

An unfortunate fellow came up to the doctor while they were standing there. The doctor felt his pulse, and with a wise grimace he took one of his needles and forced

it into the man's back, beneath his shoulder-blade. Then a woman came to the doctor. One of her husband's wives, she said, had a felon on her thumb. It was a terrible thing to have, and she wanted something to prevent her from ever having one. The doctor pounded up a little bone from the skeleton of the monkey, for he said that the strongest part of the monkey was his fingers and thumbs.

The poor woman paid the fee, took the bone dust, and went away satisfied.

Then they began their excursion through the streets of the great city of Kweilin, followed everywhere by a curious crowd, sometimes large and rude, then growing less again, till at times there were very few taking notice of them. But Scott noticed, with surprise, that even here in the capital of the province there were very few magnificent residences. It was not, however, because there were none, but because they were hidden behind high walls. The only buildings which were not thus hidden



WANDERING DEALERS.

were the temples and club buildings where the wealthy merchants met to transact their most important business, for every large Chinese city has a branch of the great financial society which in America we call the Board of Trade. But there were thousands of smaller dealers in Kweilin who were never admitted to the great club rooms. They carried on their busi-

ness in the open air, or in little shops open upon the street, which were really only the front rooms of their houses. Right in the narrow and crowded streets were merchants sitting by low tables, upon which their stock in trade was displayed, and even artists were working there with their brilliant colors, simply because in their poverty they were obliged to live in dirty and dingy little holes, somewhere, where there was not light enough, even for them to see those very bright colors.



A MERCHANT

Suddenly, before them, they saw a denser crowd of people, approaching in a body, not precisely in military order, but at least like some important procession, for upon either side the people turned out for them; the bearers of the boys' palanquin hurried with it into an alley, where they waited. They were singing or shouting; making a strange sort of commotion, at least, which to Scott assumed at once the proportions of a political riot, for everything done by strange people, in a strange land, and expressed in a language of which one knows nothing, is always intensely magnified. Scott instantly grew

anxious. He recalled the frightful stories of the Tai-ping and the Manchous, and the massacres of Europeans for no other reason than that they were Europeans, and from the bottom of his heart he wished they were safe at home in Beverly. Yet Scott was not a coward. The bravest man alive will tremble for a loved one's safety, even before a coward will tremble for himself. Care of his brother was weighing more heavily upon him every day. He too had changed during their month in China, even more than Paul. The fortune-teller's story had haunted him. The serious aspect of their position was growing more prominent every hour. Yet in this particular instance there was no cause for fear. The crowd approached and passed them. The people were laughing and chatting and taking their turns, as others grew weary, in howling or singing. They seemed even more than usually happy, Scott thought, and was the more astonished when, in their midst, he discovered a litter which they were carrying, upon which was the sunken and ghastly form of a sick man, evidently very near the grave. And, most horrible of all, to Scott, the sunken eyes were fixed in a grim stare upon a coffin, borne upon another litter beside him, while one hand of the dying man rested almost caressingly upon it.



A BUDDHIST BEGGAR.

"What in the world is that,—a criminal, condemned to death?" gasped Scott.

"No, no!" Tao-sen replied in his most ordinary tone, and Paul translated. "It is only a sick man about to die. He was away from home when he was taken sick, and the people there have presented him with that beautiful coffin to let them carry him to his home, so that he shall not die on their hands."

"A present of a *coffin!*"



PAPER-GATHERER.

"Yes, indeed, and a very fortunate man he was to fall sick in a place where there were people who would buy him off so handsomely instead of just picking him up and dropping him again as soon as they were beyond their own land. That is more common."

"But give a live man a coffin?"

"He will die some time. It is something he will surely want before long, and that pile of white cloth beside it is to make

mourning clothes for his family. It is very fine. He is very fortunate and every one is happy."

"Why, Ling, that is horrible!" Scott gasped.

Tao-sen looked up in surprise. Horrible! It would possibly have been horrible if they *had not* done it, but to call such generosity horrible Tao-sen thought an idea so heathenish and barbaric that forthwith he made up his mind that if there were



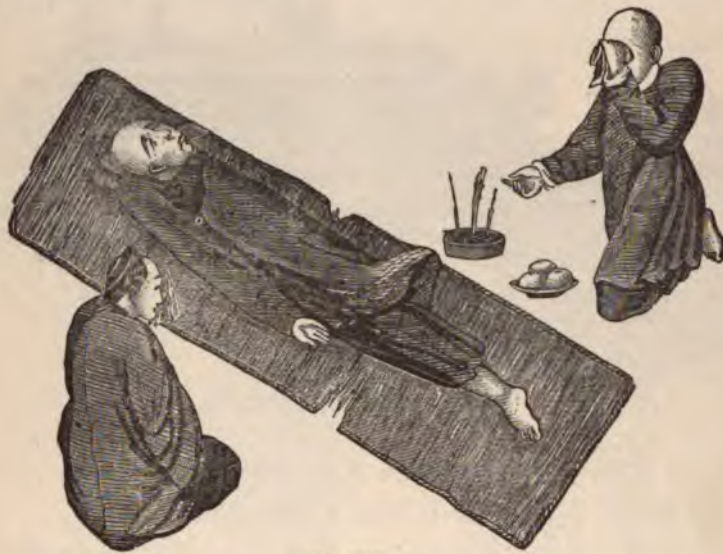
PRESENTING A CASKET.

one place above all others in the wide, wide world where it must be utterly miserable to die, it was America.

Scott was quite right and so was Tao-sen, for it makes a great difference who one is, and where he is, and what he expects, as to what will please him best. In the first place, a Chinese looks upon death, when it is approaching himself, with a calm and carelessness which cannot be found in any other nation on earth. He knows less, thinks less, and cares less about the future than any one else. His friends may fight for him, but he will not fight death for himself. His only anxiety is concerning his body. He desires a fine coffin, a grand funeral, an unforgotten grave, and a well-established ancestral tablet. These he looks upon as one leaving America might

think of a grand farewell dinner, a great ado, and magnificent escort down the harbor, and numberless letters to the greatest men in Europe. If he is sent well out of this world he has no fear but that he will be well received in the next.

So very universal is this feeling that all over China there is a proverb, more often quoted than any other, that "To be perfectly happy one must be born in Suchen, live in Canton, and



MOURNERS.

die in Liauchau." And this is just because Suchen has the handsomest people, Canton the most wealth, and at Liauchau the finest coffins are manufactured.

But there was another complication in the case of the poor man who had just been carried past the boys. He was dying in another man's house, in which case his relatives could have made untold trouble for those who had befriended him. This was why, beside the gift of a coffin, they were carrying a gift of mourning clothes to the relatives.

Up and down the streets of Kweilin the bearers carried them. It seemed like one great shop, and, indeed, that is precisely what it was; like one great store, where all the goods of a kind are placed upon one counter, and each street was a counter. Not only this, but every one of these long counters was named for the peculiar department which it represented. There was a Shoemakers' street, and there were



A GLIMPSE OF AN INTERIOR.

nothing but shoemakers upon it; and a Tailors' street, where all were tailors; and a Silversmiths' street, where every one was a smith; and a Druggists' street, where all sold drugs; and a Bakers' street, where nothing but ovens could be found; and a Tobacconists' street, with nothing but tobacconists. Off these streets were blind alleys leading nowhere, and in the alleys the poor people lived, who lived anywhere, — the people who were not poor enough to sleep in the street and were not rich enough

to own a boat to sleep in. The poor people in China are very poor. Two or three cents a day is quite sufficient to keep them alive for a hundred years, and indeed there are many in China who really do succeed in living for a very long time upon even less than this. Many of the houses lining these blind alleys are regular inns, on the European plan, only that it is not at all a European plan, but a plan that existed in China before



HIGHER LIFE.

Europe was thought of, much less an European hotel. The walls of these miserable huts are covered with bunks like the berths of an emigrant vessel, in tiers, four or five bunks high; and often these beds are never empty, but are rented to three men at once, who take their turns, like the different watches on a ship, and each occupies the miserable bed for eight hours in the twenty-four. Through the open doors the boys looked into these hotels as they passed, wondering how it was possible for mortals to exist there. They had not seen some of the

terrible places in New York City, which people, right in America, call "home." But the Chinaman in all his glory they found behind the counters or booths on every side; for to be a Chinaman is only another name for being a merchant. They sat there half asleep, between the intervals when customers roused them; but always clasping a little frame of wires with different colored beads strung on them, little mathematical machines, and asleep or awake they were always fingering the beads, computing something or other, always calculating gains probably, for a Chinaman never loses money in legitimate business. Even the games which the little children play are always full of trades and barter. They are little business men before they are any more than babies.

In order to have some money with him for immediate

use, Scott carefully took two old silver trade dollars from the belt which the prefect of Wucheun had given him, and upon this voyage of discovery Tao-sen had them changed for him into the one variety of small coin used for everything all over China. Sapecks, the English call them, little round pieces composed of pewter and copper, with a hole in the middle to hang them upon a string. To Scott's surprise Tao-sen returned to the palanquin with long strings containing over a thousand of these sapecks.

"For mercy's sake take them back again," groaned Scott. "Get me some change larger than this, and tell your banker, too, that he's made a mistake; I only sent him two dollars."



Obverse.

COIN.

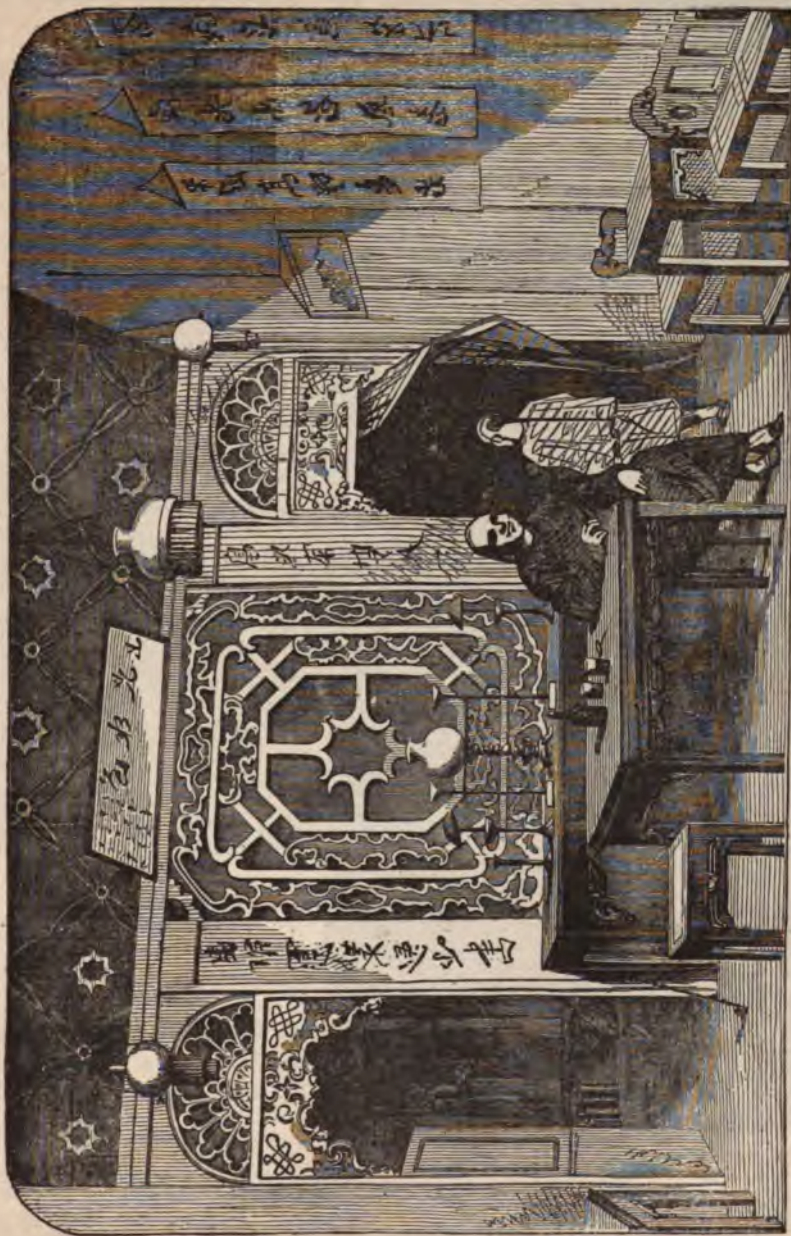
Reverse.

Tao-sen shrugged his shoulders, laughed, and replied, "Allee same two dollar, my catchee two dollar, no got nodder *tsein* (money). Dis no blong two dollar. Maskee bankee man talkee dis one piecee dollar fus-late dat nodder piecee he *chop* dollar, welly, welly choppee he. Weigh, talkee no good, takee out two stling allee same dis." And Tao-sen lifted up one of the long strings of sapecks.

Scott but poorly understood this; but the substance was that one of the silver pieces was what, in pigeon English, is called a "chop dollar," which means that the Chinese once made the same discovery which Americans made when they began to bore holes through silver dimes and quarters and half-dollars, for the sake of the silver they punched out, only instead of making one little round hole through the piece, they had machines made to stamp their names on the flat surface, thus deriving the double benefit of scraping off a little silver and sending an indelible advertisement all over China, wherever the trade dollar wandered. The Chinese have paper bank-notes, too, redeemable in silver, which will usually pass anywhere; but it is one of the most remarkable facts of China, that the only real national currency and legal tender is that copper and pewter piece in its various diversities of form. The Mexican trade dollar has its recognized value; but so soon as it becomes a chop dollar it is treated like all other gold and silver, and is simply weighed in tiny scales, such as stand on every dealer's counter, and are often carried in the hands of those going to the markets to make purchases.

"And how many of these things make a dollar?" asked Scott.

"Seven huddled," replied Tao-sen, promptly; for in mathematics, at least, he was quite at home.



MORE CONGENIAL QUARTERS.

"I know some folks in America who 'd like these things to put in the contribution box," Scott muttered.

But the very necessities of life in China render such a coin a matter of necessity. He who never could afford to buy a



LOOKING INTO A DEN.

whole orange is yet able to purchase a half; a quarter of a pear is often sold, and where the boy in America buys a stick of candy, in China he buys one walnut or a half-dozen melon seeds. It is a great incentive to charity, too, for a man must be poor, indeed, who cannot give a sapeck to a beggar. Thus the little procession passed out of the gate of Kweilin and wound up a hill to the great pagoda. It is just as natural for bearers in China, who are told to show one the sights of a city, to go at once to a pagoda as it is for a hack-driver in

America to go out at once to some cemetery. And if there is any apology for a hill near the city, "going to the pagoda" always means climbing it, and the higher the hill and the

longer the climb the better they like it. It makes it more of a penance to go to church, and indeed that is the only reason why any one in China ever goes to church. Some of the pagodas are very high, even thirteen stories, while the temple buildings surrounding them are rarely more than one. The hill the bearers climbed by a path winding round a huge rock rising almost abruptly out of the lake; yet it was not a hill,



THE HUTS ON THE HILL.

after all, but a long flight of steps cut into the rock, with a natural wall upon one side and huts built into the rock upon the other, and up and up the bearers climbed. Now the path led directly through the rock, in a gloomy tunnel, now on the brink of a precipice, where below them the lake glistened and sparkled in the sun, till at last they came suddenly upon a wild and romantic garden, in the centre of which rose a half-ruined pagoda, and about it stood the buildings of the temple;

some of them crumbling and deserted; one or two beautiful and well-cared for; all with curving roofs and corners twisting up in fierce dragon heads.



DOWN THE BEAUTIFUL LAKE.

Far, far below them stretched the lake. The half-moon about Kweilin lay at one side of the pagoda. The point of the crescent just touched the rocks upon which stood the foundations of the old temple, and from the opposite side another lake

appeared, as different as possible, but not less beautiful, where not a sign of life was to be seen, save now and then a lonely sail, where some fisherman steered his lumbering junk toward the straits, guided by that towering pagoda, which now acted much more the part of lighthouse than a place of worship. So true was this that while there were not pilgrims enough who climbed the hill to support even the few priests and keep in repair the few remaining buildings which had not fallen to decay, a fine was placed upon every one fishing in the lake beyond, for the benefit which this tower was to them in its position as lighthouse; and this toll, or all that was left of it, after the collectors and transfer agent had taken out their dividends, went to the priests, who were supposed to expend the whole of it in propping up the pagoda and in keeping lanterns hanging upon the tower every evening.

Evidently nothing at all was ever done to the garden nowadays, though in its madness there was some method, after all, and there was beauty in the very tangle of that wilderness, which betrayed the fact that long before that garden began to run after wild oats it had been trained and guided by a careful hand.

It was a wild corner of the earth to find in the very heart of the crowded Chinese Empire, and from its striking variety the boys gathered additional pleasure. Paul ran about through the tangled shrubbery with Tao-sen, and laughed and panted and shouted, and his cheeks grew rosy again, quite dispelling Scott's fear of an hour before, and the ugly vision which had risen before him, fashioned out of the blind fortune-teller's story, as he had wondered for a moment if sickness possibly were not to be the gaunt dragon whose jaws were so unexpectedly to close upon them.

The vision and the fear vanished completely; yet, at the very moment when they vanished, Scott was sitting with his brother more really and actually in the jaws of that dragon than at any time since they had entered China. And had he only known, or thought of it, this was the very thing which the blind fortune-teller had told him.

While Paul was romping about the ruins, and Scott thought the little party all alone, except for the few priests in the old temple to whom they had given a hundred sapecks, as ample remuneration for the privilege of thus desecrating the grounds with their noise and sport, another party, less noisy, less gay, but no less intent, might have been seen by one who had eyes to see them, prowling in the darker shadows; quietly waiting in positions from which they could command the best views of what was going on about the pagoda, eagerly watching, patiently waiting, for something or other. There were four men in all. Two were Chinamen, probably servants. Two were — What were they? Surely not Chinese, though they dressed like Chinamen. Their faces were dark and grimy and bearded; but their skins were more the color of dirt or of something external. There was nothing about them but their clothes which was thoroughly Chinese; yet they might have been Chinese, after all. Who could tell?

As the boys alighted from the palanquin they were standing on a rock just above them, looking down. Eagerly they started forward. The two with beards looked fiercely for a moment upon the little group below, then silently they withdrew to the more secluded places.

It was strange, very strange. Could it be possible that there was some one who knew our boys in China? Knew them? That was a strange way for one to conduct himself

who recognizes a friend in a far-off country. No; there was no friendship expressed in the faces of the two on the rock, even if the fierce glare of the eyes of one of them might have been called a recognition.



THE SUSPICIOUS FIGURES.

When Paul had traversed the garden about the pagoda, followed by Scott and Tao-sen, he entered one of the ruins. Boldly enough his little feet trod the dusty and uneven floor,

and, without thought of danger, Scott followed. Tao-sen would have much preferred to remain outside. There are hosts of uncertainties hovering about such grinning skeletons perched



HE CREPT UP AND LOOKED IN.

upon high hills, which have been smiting down evil spirits for ages, and then for ages more have ceased to smite them down, and only offered them shelter instead. There was a canny echo inside that deserted chamber. Tao-sen knew very well

that the place was full of goblins, but the thought of remaining outside was even more terrible, for outside was full of goblins, too, and he would much rather face the goblins inside, in company with Scott and Paul, than to face the goblins outside all alone.

They had scarcely entered the old ruin when out of the shadows crept the four strange beings. The two who were strangest came slowly forward between the others. One of the veritable Chinamen remained behind, as if on watch, while the other walked before and cautiously approached the door where Scott and Paul had entered. He, too, was on watch. Between them the other two were stealthily looking this way and that, like tigers in a Bengal jungle. The servant in advance approached the door, looked in, muttered something, and the two behind replied together, "Yes, yes, when they come out," and silently drew themselves round the corner of the ruin and crouched upon the grass, ready to act upon a moment's warning.

On and on Paul wandered, much farther than the others would have gone. There was a peculiar fascination about the place which pleased the old head resting upon his young shoulders. A dreamy softness stole into his eyes, such as sometimes came over them upon the beach at Beverly as he watched the great waves coming in, and wondered how they came there, where they came from, where they went to when they shimmered and glistened and glided back, in a strong and subtle undertow, beneath the new breakers rolling in above them, and how long it would be before those very same drops of water came dancing over the pebbly beach of Beverly once more.

"Where are you going, Paul?" asked Scott as the little fel-

low, now almost lost in the shadows, turned into a darker passage. And there was something so hollow in the echo that even Scott was startled, while Tao-sen was frightened out of his wits.

"Going up these steps. Come and see," Paul called to them, and hurried on.

There was no help for it, and Scott hurried faster through the dust and dirt, with Tao-sen's teeth chattering close behind him. When, however, he had reached the passage where Paul had disappeared, he saw a faint light, far above, disclosing, as it fell, a flight of narrow stone steps, and little Paul busily climbing.

At the summit they found themselves standing upon a small balcony, facing one of the few buildings still in fair preservation on the hill. It was a small, square house hardly a temple, just a little pavilion, and was doubtless kept in repair simply because there was nothing to it, no ornaments to become injured, no strong supports to crumble, nothing that could grow dilapidated, hence it required very little time and less money to withhold it from the clutches of time. In the long, long ago it had doubtless been a royal entrance to an elaborate court, beyond which court was the centre of the buildings about the pagoda.

Paul was too venturesome, perhaps, and yet it was not very hard to clamber down over the irregular walk of the ruin, from the balcony to the platform of the little pavilion before them, and down they went, without once thinking of turning back by the way they had entered.

Once more in the sunlight, Tao-sen's teeth ceased chattering. It was warmer there, and he again took the lead. Up the steps he trotted in advance, for through the pavilion lay the path

which would lead them again to the place where they entered the ruin. Indeed, from the pavilion they looked directly down the side wall of the ruin as it bordered on what once had been the court, and the door was just round the corner.



TAO-SEN STARTED BACK.

As Tao-sen reached the upper steps he started back. Never in this world was there a more thoroughly frightened Chinaman in all the great Middle Kingdom.

What did Tao-sen see? Why, only the four who were sitting by the door of the ruin, patiently expecting them to come out that way. Who were they? Tao-sen did not know. Two of them at least he was sure he had never seen before. "Ghosts or spirits" in all probability, yet he was frightened from the tip of his queue to the bottom of his thick-soled shoes. Suddenly remembering those who were coming up behind him, he turned, caught Paul in his arms, and ran down the steps again, motioning Scott to follow and follow silently.

Had it been in America, anywhere, indeed, but in China, Scott would have insisted upon knowing what it was he was running from before he ran, if, indeed he had not deliberately stood still or advanced, just because he was tempted to run away. But everything was so different in China, everything was so mysterious, so thoroughly upside down, that, utterly ignorant of what it was wisdom for him to fear, and what it was bravery to face, he was ready to follow Tao-sen's advice even to silently running from an old ruin.

They reached the palanquin, and the bearers, receiving a liberal promise from Tao-sen of extra pay for extra speed, started at a rapid pace down the hill.

"What was it, Ling, that scared you so?" asked Scott, as he noticed Tao-sen, who ran beside the palanquin, continually looking back, even after they were a mile and more away.

"Ghost," replied Tao-sen, and "Ghost," was all he would reply, but he was restless and nervous. When they reached the lake he proposed that they should take a boat and sail along the shore to the wharf, instead of going farther in the palanquin. The road, he said, was very bad, and the bearers were becoming very tired.

"I rather guess that Master Ling is the one who is tired," said Scott.

"My blong welly, welly tired," replied Tao-sen, with a sigh.

Scott laughed, but Paul had eagerly grasped the idea of a sail on the lake, and the first craft upon the shore offering any adequate accommodation was engaged to carry them back to the city.

A huge cormorant sat upon a rock just over the water, as they entered the boat. Scott turned toward it and waved his hand to frighten it from the rock, but the bird only looked at him for a moment, stretched its wings, and settled down again to the quiet composure of a real, born Chinaman.

"Guess the bird's sick, is n't he, Ling?" asked Scott.

Tao-sen laughed.

"He no seek. Datee he blong ling wal-lah, fus-late catchee fish. Look see! Allee same evlywhere. You no sabbee?"

And looking about them, as Tao-sen indicated, Scott and Paul together did "sabbee" a very new idea to them in the art of fishing. Fishing smacks and junks were all about them. That was evident from the piles of fish, indicating a rich harvest, lying on the open decks. Some of the boats were moored upon the shore, some floating about in the water, wherever the current carried them. But there were no rods, no lines, no spears, no nets even, to be seen anywhere, only birds, great awkward cormorants, on every boat in the water.



A CORMORANT.

The birds would sit upon the junk rail and watch, while the fishermen lay upon the deck and smoked. Now and then a bird would dive. Sometimes it would come up out of the water just as it went down, and fly back to the boat in a disconsolate way. Sometimes the birds would circle in the air, over the water, where they could watch to better advantage.



HARD AT WORK.

Sometimes when they dove they would bring up only a little fish, good for nothing, even to a Chinaman, and sometimes it would be so large that one bird found it hard to complete the capture alone, when another was sent to its assistance.

"Why don't they eat the fish instead of bringing them to the junk?" asked Scott.

"No can swallow; gottee Mellican man collar all loundee neck," replied Tao-sen, laughing as though he had perpetrated a most admirable joke upon his American masters for the stiff, uncomfortable collars which their countrymen were so fond of

wearing; and so, indeed, he had, but Scott was preoccupied in examining the little strap which he had just discovered about the neck of each cormorant, literally making its throat so small that it could not swallow the fish it caught.

Now and then, by way of encouragement, when a bird brought up a particularly large fish and sat drying its feathers after the struggle, the owner would loosen the strap and give it



FISHING WITH A NET.

a very small fish to eat. The bird swallowed it gratefully, and not at all as though it were but a very small percentage of its own labor. A little later, however, they passed a larger junk, where one poor fellow sat disconsolately in the stern with a long bamboo pole and line, while others were laughing at him, and one tossed him a little fish to eat. Then a curious craft approached them, with neither sails nor oars, yet it moved rapidly. Paul watched it intently for a moment, and exclaimed, "A steamer!"

Scott looked and cried, "A steamer!" too, and was about to add something about great Cæsar's ghost, when he noticed a smile on Tao-sen's face, and hesitated.



FISHING ON THE LAKE.

"Datee Cheena stimmer," said Tao-sen. "No winchee coal. Plenty go no fire."

"Good enough," said Scott, admiringly, as the Chinese steamer without steam drew near and then passed them, in

spite of the utmost exertions of their oarsmen. There were four wheels, real paddle-wheels, two on a side, only instead of engines there were half-naked coolies within, turning with might and main on the great wheels. For centuries this

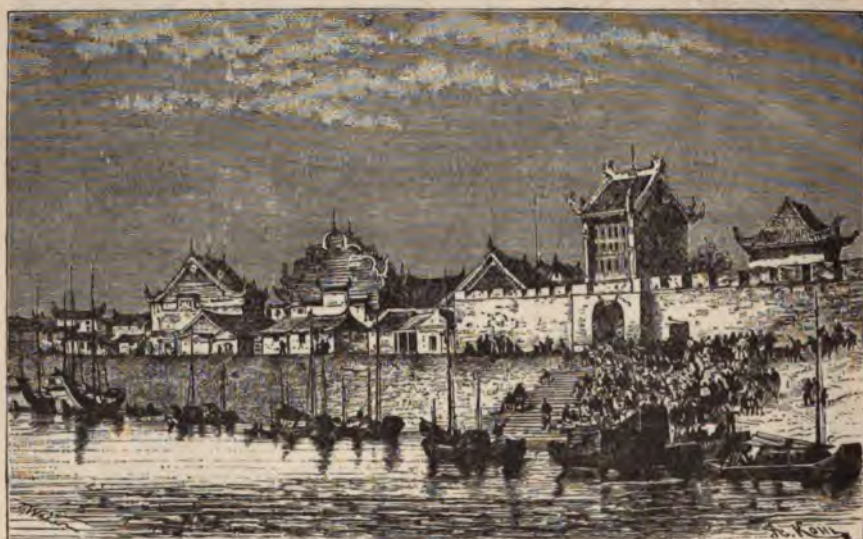


A HAPPY SAILOR

kind of boat has sailed the waters of the Chinese Empire, needing only the strong arm of a stationary engine to have given Fulton's triumph to the world ages ago.

As they neared the crowded wharves in the central district of the city, larger craft appeared in every direction, with the dingy yellow sails and striped flags; and a most curious sight,

in the shape of a floating island, one of those peculiar contrivances of Chinese ingenuity, which, upon some of the larger lakes, appear in great numbers. First a large raft is constructed of bamboo poles, then tough branches are laid upon them, branches which will for a long time resist the influences of the water, and a thick layer of soil is placed on top. Here three or four little cottages are built, sometimes even a very



APPROACHING THE WHARF.

respectable little village, with gardens and well-cultivated fields. Scott, with an eye to business and political economy, looked admiringly upon the floating island, and observed, —

“ I tell you, Paul, there’s an idea for some of the rich men of Boston. ’T would save their going out into the country the last day of April if they only had farms like that, which they could float into the harbor.”

It was nearly noon when they reached the wharf, and as

Paul was hungry and the communal palace a long way off, Scott stopped at a fruit-stand and bought some oranges. While he was making the purchase, Tao-sen sat down on a little



THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE.

bench beside the stand. That was quite a customary thing to do, for who ever saw a Chinaman standing up where there was an opportunity for him to sit, and who ever knew a Chinaman who did not laugh at the European mania for exercise. "Is it

not much more sensible," they say, "to sit in an easy-chair and drink tea than to run wildly this way and that for no reason but to get one's self out of breath and become tired? Is it not more consistent to lie upon a couch and munch melon seeds, or indeed to go to bed and sleep, than to walk off a mile or more, like a race-horse, just for the pleasure of walking back again?" But Tao-sen was really tired. He had walked more than one mile and run more than one mile, and though this of itself would not have tired him, he had, for half the distance, carried a very heavy weight of anxiety upon his shoulders. His face showed plainly that he was troubled, and that the ghost of the ruined pagoda was not a goblin to be forgotten the moment it was out of sight.

Just as Scott had completed his purchase, some one stepped up to Tao-sen and demanded pay from him for sitting on his bench.

"What do you mean?" exclaimed Tao-sen, angrily. "Can I not sit where I will, in the street?"

"Not by my shop," replied the other, as angrily. "Do you think I will build a bench and keep it clean, just for every one to come and sit on who is tired?"

"You don't keep it clean, at any rate," muttered Tao-sen, as he reluctantly handed the man a sapeck and got up. Then a shout of merriment rose from the crowd at poor Tao-sen's expense, and he realized that they had recognized from his way of speaking that he was from another province, and had only played a little joke upon him. It was well for the boys that this joke drew attention from them, for it enabled them to hire a palanquin and start for the communal palace before the crowd realized fully what an opportunity it had to inspect the two little devils of the West.

CHAPTER XVII.

BEFORE THE GOVERNOR.

ON reaching their apartments the boys found the one old servant awaiting them, in a new sense of their importance, and prostrating himself to them even before they had alighted from the palanquin.

“What’s the row, now?” Scott asked, in astonishment.

“He, he!” laughed Tao-sen. “Jus now beginnee low. Bime by catchee fus-late low. Look see. Dattee letter. Boss Cheenaman litee letter.”

As Scott’s eyes followed the finger of Tao-sen, he discovered a large official sheet, carefully folded and sealed, with a few huge words on the outside. The servant approached and reverently presented it to Tao-sen, saying, “His Excellency, the great governor of Kweilin, invites the illustrious persons to dine at his humble mansion at two hours past the mid-day.” And Tao-sen, bowing to the letter, took it reverently in his hand and passed it on to his young master Paul, repeating the message, when Paul, as thorough an adept at imitation as a Chinese, but with a merry twinkle in his eyes, bowed in his turn to the letter, then took it in his tiny hand and turned to Scott, repeating the message in English.

Scott broke the seal, much to the horror of the old servant, and in a very business-like manner opened the letter. To his astonishment he could not find a single word inside, for the very good reason that no one had written any there.

"Where's the letter, Ling?" he asked, a little sharply, thinking they must be playing some joke on him.

"Dattee letter," replied Tao-sen, in his turn astonished, and pointing to the outside, which had acted as envelope. "Nuff said, dattee talkee, big boss Cheenaman litee letter to little-big Mellican man."

"Well, where does it talk about coming to dinner at two o'clock?" asked Scott.

"Dattee one man bling letter, he talkee."

"Well, why in the world did n't your 'boss, big Cheenaman' write down what he wanted to say?"

"Why for litee? No man here sabbee. Allee same talkee evly man sabbee," said Tao-sen.

And that indeed was the fact, and a very common fact, too. Many a letter is written in China which consists only of an envelope, more or less elaborate, to give credence to the bearer, who delivers a verbal message conveying all which the writer wishes to say; for letters, even when several pages are carefully written, amount to nothing after all but a collection of stereotyped sentences, all to be found in the Book of Rites, with at most only a few words at the end, if absolutely necessary, upon the business matter which called for it.

A few years ago an American in Shanghai, having occasion to write to a countryman in the interior, suggested to his native teacher that it would be a good opportunity for him to send a letter to his mother, who lived in the same city.

"Very true, very true," replied the professor of the great Shanghai college. "My honorable mother must be very old, if indeed she is still living. I have not heard from her for more than ten years." And forthwith he called his assistant, a young man of letters from the college, and directed him to

write for him to his old mother. The young man wrote it, and even had the goodness to seal it without once thinking of giving it to the professor to read. Then the professor took the letter, directed it, and handed it to his American pupil.

Doubtless the American was astonished, yet why should he have been? The professor had been teaching and training that pupil for years. It would have been a poor compliment to his industry had he failed to instruct him in the proper way for a son to address his mother.

This was all the letter the boys received, but they accepted at once, though Scott would have much preferred to hear from the governor that they were at once to go on to Hong-Kong. Poor boy! He little dreamed of what a roundabout way to Jerusalem theirs was yet to be, and indeed what the Jerusalem was to be which they should finally reach.

Yet it would really have been a great pity to have left Kweilin without seeing that beautiful palace of the governor. An officer was waiting in the court with state palanquins, to conduct them to the palace, and at last the palanquins were taken upon a little boat, for the way to the royal entrance to the palace lay over a little arm of the lake. This was a very bright idea of some former governor, to prevent a crowd from gather-



LITTLE TREES.

ing at his gate. There was a vast court planted with trees, not growing in the ground, but in large ornamental pots, for the gardener's art is carried to a higher degree in China than anywhere else on earth. They make trees grow in all sorts of shapes, and the more grotesque the better they like it. Nor are they satisfied with this. The great mania of the florist is



CHINESE GARDENER.

to make that which is naturally very large assume all of its perfect proportions, but still remain very small. One sees the giant trees of the forest in tiny little pots, hanging about the courts, and even more than this; for as the women of America are fond of decorating themselves with flowers, the women of China adorn their hair even with pine-trees, — real pine-trees; not a rough branch, with its hard, green needles, but a whole

tree, with a dozen branches, yet not over two inches high, growing in a little silver pot.

Through the beautiful garden, a long flight of marble steps led from the water to the court above, and thence a marble path led them into apartments which were spacious, lofty, exquisitely clean, and delightfully cool, and all the way they were followed by servants of all ranks, offering every possible assistance.

The furniture was gorgeously ornamented with gold and silver, and the walls were covered with bright silk hangings covered with pictures and mottoes. The carpets were made of bamboo peelings,

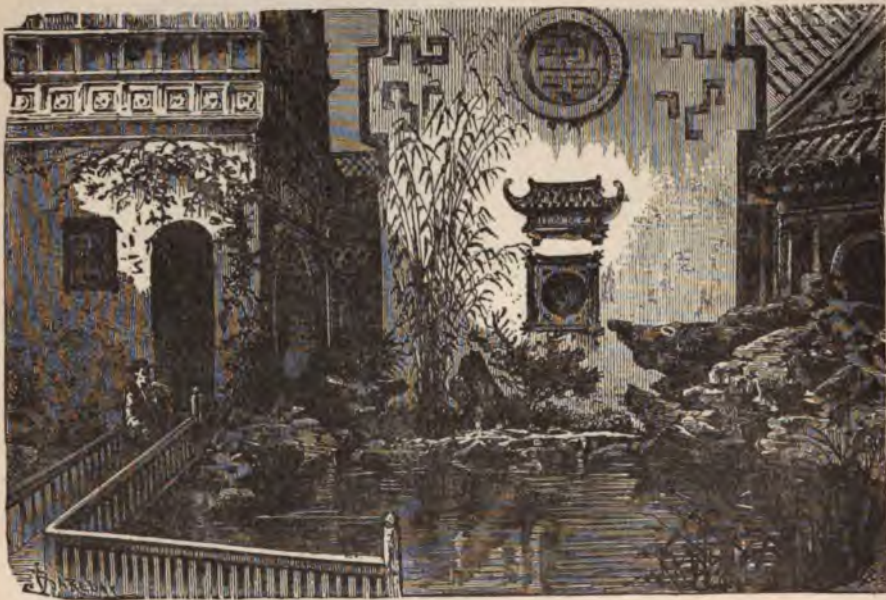


FLORAL ORNAMENTS.

woven together and painted in brilliant colors. There were immense porcelain urns and vases everywhere. They were ushered at last into a magnificent saloon, where, in a wilderness of Chinese art of every description, they discovered a beautiful French clock, and where there might have been a

fireplace — only that there never are fireplaces anywhere — there stood an American stove, a little parlor stove, with the maker's name and "New York" plainly printed on the iron door. There was no chimney anywhere, however, and no pipe from the stove, and no sign that there had ever been a fire there.

"That's a pretty thing for a parlor ornament," said Scott.



A BALCONY IN THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE.

"It's just as pretty as that big Chinese jug in our front hall at home," said Paul.

"But this thing was made for a fire, and see, Paul, the governor has just turned it into a big tobacco-box."

"Well," said Paul, "that jug was made to hold a tree, and we made an umbrella-stand of it. I don't think it's any worse."

"That's so, Paul," Scott replied. "It's just the way, I fancy,

all over the world. If anything comes from miles and miles away, we are just sure to think it's worth its weight in gold."



PAUL LOOKED INTO THE LIBRARY.

Just outside the window, which was made of transparent shell, like a beautiful screen, and pushed back through the day, they saw the governor's florist at his work, making everything smaller than it should be, and through curtains, half drawn,

Paul's searching eyes caught a glimpse of the great governor of Kweilin sitting beside a table, and some one, probably that inevitable secretary, standing before him. The relation of the two was sure enough from their dress and appearance; even Paul had learned enough to know the "mandarins with yellow buttons," and to feel a thrill of Chinese awe when he saw the red girdles. But beyond this, the secretary looked much more like a governor than the governor, and the governor looked much more like a secretary than the secretary. The room was a library, and many costly volumes were lying upon ornamented shelves, opposite the door. It was a dark room, too, that is, there were no windows, but this is often the case with some of the little private corners of a Chinese palace, and though it was broad daylight, the soft, yellow glow of a Chinese lantern, which was always kept burning, fell full upon the face of the governor. It was not a handsome face. The Chinese thought it a wonderful countenance, probably because it was not so Chinese as most they saw. The head was longer, the cheeks were thinner, the skin was whiter, the eyes were straighter, the mustache was finer and more wavy, the queue, which fell over the arm of his chair, touched the floor. But Paul thought it a stern, hard face. His little heart instantly rebelled. His blue eyes lost their merry wrinkles and became cold and gray. In fact, Paul, without more than that one peep through the curtain, had risen to his dignity, and was ready to take a stand in all his little helplessness, heart and fist against the governor of Kweilin.

Presently the secretary came in and conducted them into the large saloon, where the dining preparations were already well under way, and the servants brought hot water and tea, and all the forms of strictest etiquette were observed, but

they did not seem so strange, now, and indeed, Scott began to enjoy the curious antics, and almost to like some parts of the rites, while Paul entered into the forms and ceremonies with zest and accuracy, and all the solemnity of one born to them. But for nearly an hour the governor did not appear. That was not at all in accordance with the rites. Tao-sen knew it well, and it caused his Chinese pate no little annoyance. Scott realized the fact, and was a little indignant. Paul had seen all he wanted to see of the governor, through a crack in the curtains, and did not care if he never came. While his eyes were busy exploring, and his ears were busy listening to the secretary, who spoke very good English, and was the very first Chinese they had met who could speak English, his fingers were busy cracking melon seeds. He could do it as well now as the old schoolmaster of Wucheun, and his teeth were busy munching upon the kernel. But for his golden hair and blue eyes and pink-white skin one would surely have thought him a veritable Chinese. He even disdained the fact that the secretary spoke English so well, and when he said anything, which was not very often, he said it in Chinese. Scott then listened in astonishment. He always listened in astonishment when Paul spoke in that terrible language, wondering how in the world he could do it, when he would have given anything to have been able even to arrange a single sentence, but in spite of all his efforts could speak the Chinese no better than he could the Hindustani, which was not at all. The secret of it all was, that Paul, like any other boy of his age, was not half so particular about how he said it as about what he said, and while he sat munching the melon seeds he was mentally munching upon all the words he knew, and twisting them about till they should form a sentence

that would mean something, then he spoke them out, and began munching on a new combination. And there was no danger of either the words or the melon seeds giving out, for of words he was laying in a fresh supply every day, and lest melon seeds run low, it is quite the custom for dealers to station themselves on dusty highways, through the melon season, with an enormous pile of fruit about them, and present a slice to every weary, thirsty traveller who passes, on condition that he will eat it where he stands and give them back the seeds. In America we should at once have enormous factories, grinding and crushing the melons, and throwing away the delicious juices. But the Chinaman knows better than to throw away anything that is good to eat. There are too many mouths in the Middle Kingdom for that, and a stronger argument still is the theory that every act of benevolence is going to count to one's benefit in the future state; so that when the dealer gives his grist to a human mill to grind, he is reaping a great reward for the future, as well as laying up melon seeds to sell in the market. Christianity puts this theory into beautiful doctrine when it says that he who giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord, but Christians do not always put it into such beautiful practice.

The boys were rapidly becoming accustomed to the queer things about them, and to the very queer people, with their odd customs and their odder clothes. The American who goes from San Francisco direct to China, with his head and heart all ready to call everything remarkable, is quite apt to consider the Chinese supremely ridiculous, and if he did but know it, the Chinese return the compliment with interest. "They are very amusing," they say, "these devils of the West, with their tight-fitting clothes and their wonderful breeches,

and their ugly big hats, and their stiff collars, which look as if they were about to cut off their ears, with their dress coats which cannot button around them, and always with buttons as large as sapecks sewed on behind where there is nothing at all to button."

"How many kinds of animals are there in China?" Paul asked the secretary, after some minutes of silence in which he



INLAND FERRY-BOATS.

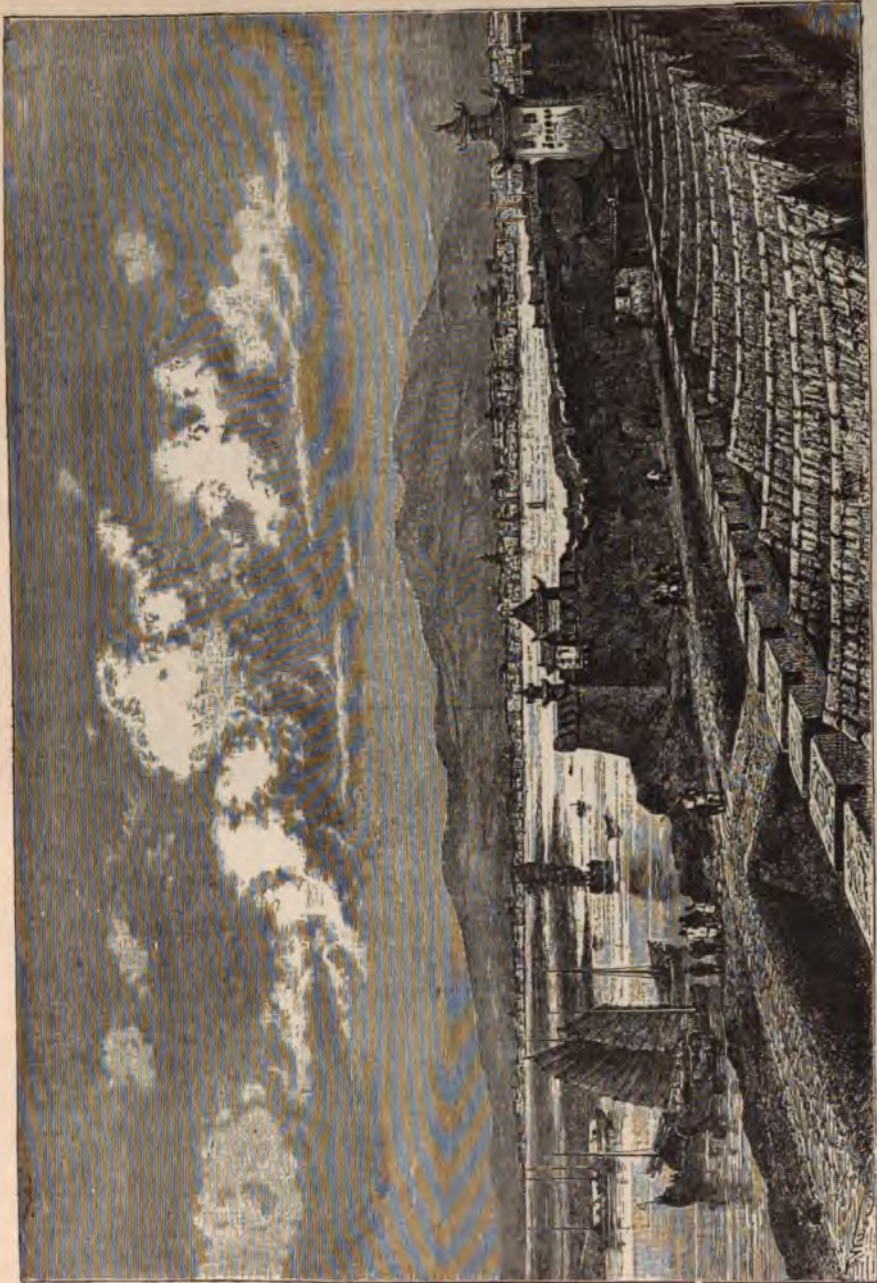
had been preparing the sentence, and fortunately the secretary was so proud of his English that he quite ignored the fact that Paul had not spoken it, and answered accordingly, or neither Paul nor Scott could have understood a dozen words, for even then there were many names which could not be put into English at all, for the very good reason that there are no such animals in Europe or America. The horses are very small, but there are camels and buffaloes, and many kinds of bears, and a sort of tiger, and leopards and panthers and

badgers, and rats, and cats without tails, and mice. There are curious oxen and cows, and pigs which are all black, and dogs with black tongues. For contrast, the cats without tails are white, and have long, silky hair and tiny ears. There are all kinds of squirrels and otter and sable. Then through Southern China there are even rhinoceros and great tapirs, and in the mountains there are deer and goats and antelopes, monkeys, large and small, and over the plains the huge musk-ox, whose skin is used for a ferry-boat after he is dead.

Scott listened to the story of the animals with only half interest, while Paul's eyes and ears were wide open. But as soon as possible he turned the conversation into a more commercial vein, where he was more interested.

"How about your manufactures?" he asked.

"Manufactures?" the secretary shrugged his shoulders and cracked a melon seed. "Manufactures? We manufacture everything. Before the very first days of history we manufactured silk. The Mongols called it sirge and the Manchous called it sirk. They carried it first to Russia, and there they called it chelk, and when it reached as far as England they called it silk. It is all the same. You Europeans are using our Chinese words every day, because you have to; you have our productions, and you have no names to call them but the names we give them. We manufacture porcelain, and show the Western devils how to do it. But they cannot do it so well as we do, after all, and they have to call it china because it comes from the land of Thsing-che, or Tchina. Our nankeens and cottons, our flowered satins and crapes, are worn the world over. Our hemp cloth is stronger than can be made anywhere else. The powerful loadstone was used in China 2,500 years ago. You use our fire-crackers in America,



PORCELAIN "FACTORY."

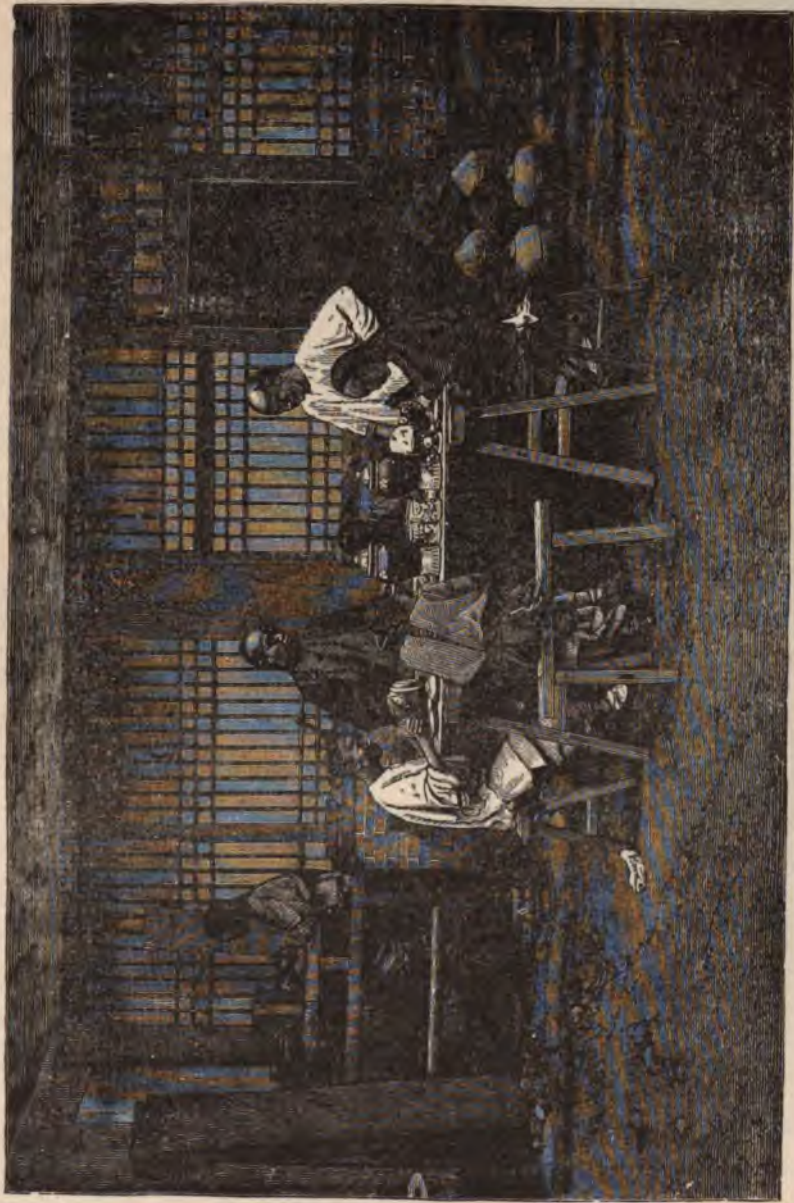
and we taught the Europeans how to make cannon with which to kill each other, and how to make the metal to make their cannons of; we taught them how to cut and polish precious stones, and how to print their words in books. We made paper before the Western world was in existence. We made the first ink with which to write upon it. Who can produce such embroidery and lacquered work as the Chinese? Who



ABOVE THE CITY.

made the first, the last, the most durable bronze? Who first moulded it into shapes and forms and images? The children of the Son of Heaven,—the men of the great Middle Kingdom. Take from the wide world what China has taught it, and the wide world would be nothing, less than nothing. It would starve; it would be naked; it would die." And thereupon he cracked another melon seed.

Paul did not care a straw about all this, and Scott took it all with a strong adulteration of doubt which made the dose very



PAINTING PORCELAIN.

weak, when in reality it was true, absolutely true, every word of it, only told in the flowery eloquence of the land of flowers, and thoroughly Chinese, that is to say, thoroughly egotistical and conceited. Yet it was quite true.

Scott would have believed more of the secretary's story could he have seen the great porcelain factory at King-te-ching, for instance, but that was farther than he was destined to wander. There on the banks of a great river he would have seen an enormous village. A village! yes, though there were more than a million inhabitants, still it was only a village, for it was only one of the suburbs of a city. The city was not so large as this single village, though all about it there were villages almost as large as King-te-ching. But the city was the oldest of them all, and was walled, and that was what made it a city, and the villages were not walled, and that was what made them villages.

Long before he had reached the village he would have heard the noise and bustle of a most busy life. It would have seemed like a riot or a furious mob, compared with the quiet about Kweilin, though even Kweilin seemed noisy enough compared with Wucheun, and Wucheun had seemed a perfect bedlam when they first found themselves in it. And all day long there were clouds of smoke rising over the village, and at night bright sheets of flame came out of tall chimneys like a great conflagration. There are over three thousand of these chimneys in King-te-ching, all blazing away together, all marking great ovens where beautiful porcelain is baking. And the million inhabitants of the village are all laborers in the great factories. So soon as the children are old enough to be anything but babies they begin to work, and as soon as their mothers have finished the work of the house they turn their hands to work-

ing on porcelain. But there is no confusion, for no one knows how to do but one very small part of the immense amount of work required upon even a very small piece of porcelain. One man, for instance, paints a certain flower, another paints one kind of leaf, and another a bird. One covers with blue, another with red. The red man could not and would not do the blue, any more than the bird man would do the flower, and that is why a certain kind of bird or a certain kind of flower is always exactly alike on so many china vases. And every little porcelain ornament before it reaches our mantels and cabinets has passed through over sixty different pairs of hands. Some of the things they make are very wonderful. There is a curious double cup where the outer cup is solid and the inner cup perforated with tiny holes, and there are cups with beautiful figures painted inside, which can only be seen when the cup is full.

They do not manufacture such beautiful and rare articles and of such remarkable material to-day as years ago. Some of the devices are almost lost arts, which fact, aided by the mania in our New World for that which is most ancient, has caused a great demand for old china in the large markets of the Middle Kingdom. For years this demand has not only kept up, but been increasing. One



PORCELAIN COMPLETE.

might think that even the great Empire of China would run low in time, but our modern American factories turning out "old furniture" are only another thing which the Chinese have taught us. It is the same secret which accounts for there being ten times more old porcelain in China to-day than there was fifty years ago. They mix a little red earth with their clay. They bake it for the first time, then boil



A FACE WHICH DID NOT PLEASE PAUL.

it in oil. Then they bake it a second time and bury it in a sewer. Then after two months they bake it a third time and sell it as "rare old china of the dynasty of Yuen."

The governor came at last, after Scott's patience was almost exhausted and Tao-sen was in a boiling rage. But he came with such an amount of official grandeur that Scott

quailed and almost wished he had never come at all, and Tao-sen became a miserable, trembling flat-on-his-face Chinaman again, instantly. Paul was the only one who was not humbled by the grandeur of the governor, and yet he was the greatest hero-worshipper of them all. He wanted another kind of a hero, that was all. He would have knelt as Tao-sen did, and touched his forehead to the floor, before a stalwart arm like that of Dhondaram's. But he did not like the governor's face, and all

the silks and jewels and yellow buttons and red sashes could not overcome it. He forgot to be a Chinaman, and became an American at once, and to be a *true* American is to be the *equal* of any man who breathes, and the *superior* of any man who stoops to evil, cruelty, or tyranny.

As soon as the governor entered and seated himself the dinner began. It began like all other Chinese dinners, both in food and conversation, just as far as possible from the way in which it should end. Every one knew why the boys were there, but no one spoke of the matter so near their hearts. It might not be spoken of at all, surely not till they were all ready to go away, and with the man who sat at the head of the table Scott did not dare to advance his own subject as he had with the prefect of Wucheun.

Tao-sen was not needed as interpreter, for the secretary was too proud of his power to allow any one to act his part. And what did he talk about? Why, Confucius and wisdom, of course. What else could it have been but civil government and law. He was stern, proud, haughty, graceful, tall, and powerful. Scott thought him perfection itself. Paul thought him very imperfect. But from every line and feature one would be very sure he must command. He was young for the position he held, not over forty, certainly, but he was well posted upon all the requirements, and held a strong hand over the province. Scott was not so inquisitive as usual; he hardly ventured upon a question, being better satisfied to remain on the defensive and listen. Evidently the governor was a man who would become angry upon a very slight infringement, and to see him when he was nominally social, pleasant, and endeavoring to be agreeable was quite enough to made one dread molesting him.

Confucius said that as when one finds a priceless treasure he

endeavors to hide it, so the greatest wisdom of the sage is evident in his appearing to be a fool; but though the governor knew all about everything which Confucius ever said, he did not seem to appreciate the necessity of seeming anything but the cold-blooded, savage fellow which he really was.

The secretary said that the ancient days were not so brilliant as those of the present dynasty. He meant it as a compliment to the governor, who was one of the strongest rising men in the Empire, and destined, no doubt, to soon hold a much higher position even, than that of head of one of the eighteen provinces. But the governor turned upon him sharply and replied, "That is because you are blind. You think a star is small, for you only see its twinkle. A brilliant light shone upon antiquity, we see but a faint reflection of it in the writings of Confucius and Law-tse, and in the things which the ancients accomplished. It appears that they were in darkness because we see them through a cloud in which we ourselves are standing. A child born at midnight, when he sees the sun rise, thinks that yesterday never existed. Fools! you, I, and every one."

What could Scott expect to accomplish in talking with such a man about sending him on to Hong-Kong? What could such a man care about whether he and little Paul ever went to Hong-Kong, or where they ever went, or if they ever went anywhere?

"If we are living in the night," replied the sage old secretary, whose white mustache and deeply wrinkled face seemed to secure him from feeling the rebuke of the governor, "it at least behooves us to hope that the morning may be brighter than ever yet has dawned on China."

"It behooves us rather to struggle to resist the dire influences about us, and let hope for the morning alone till the sun

of antiquity sees fit to rise again," replied the governor. "The night is dangerous. The air is full of evil. Animals show us this. They seek shelter at night. Our own bodies teach us this. The raging of fever is stronger at night. Why do we send in the morning to know how a sick man has passed the night, instead of at evening to know how he has passed the day. China is raging in fever and darkness. There are evil influences breathing against us. The Western devils taint the air. They poison our vital parts. Had I the arm of him who carved from nothing, and hewed from his own will the giant fragments forming the world, I would sink the Western rocks so far beneath the sea that no ship's anchor ever could catch upon the cursed land of the red-haired devils who would suck the blood of China."

This he said without apparently thinking or caring for the two young representatives of the people he was so roundly abusing.

"Your arm is strong, and your will stronger. It may be the redeemer of China live's fo-day," remarked the secretary, with no desire to conceal his compliments, any more than to cover his corrections.

"What is man?" returned the governor, scornfully. "At the age of ten, a mass of weak and almost helpless bones and flesh, with a little brain, capable of grasping the first threads of science. At twenty, strong and rash, and beginning to comprehend that he knows nothing. At thirty, robust and brave and aware that he is good for nothing. At forty, prudent and strong, wise enough to be careful, nothing more. At fifty, keen, shrewd, full of experience, and full of uncertainty. At sixty he trembles; he must sit on his couch and tell others what to do. At seventy he must lie upon his bed

and do as others direct. At eighty his bleared eyes and benumbed senses are more helpless than a child. Beyond that a grave and a tablet, for others to look at, for him, what ? ”

The secretary was silent. He was nearing seventy himself, and he felt the thrust.

For a little while the dinner went on in silence. Then turning to Scott, the governor said, —

“ Your people think themselves very clever in stories they have made up about astronomy and the marvellous stars.”

“ I have heard,” said Scott, timidly, “ that at the great observatory of Peking the Chinese have some very remarkable contrivances.”

The governor laughed. “ I can show them to you right here,” he said, directing a servant to bring in models of the curious astronomical dials on the observatory roof. “ They are indeed remarkable, remarkable for their nonsense and absurdity.”

Scott looked up in astonishment, but the governor continued, “ Look at this. It tells the time of day, and this other the time of night, and this the month of the moon and the day of the month, and this when the sun will be darkened and this the moon. I have a clock which was made in France which will do it just as well, and this watch of mine, which was made in England. But on a cloudy day or night these dials are good for nothing. This watch runs down and is useless. The clock is so dusty in its wheels that it works like a tired coolie, and sometimes does not arrive at noon till I am ready to go to bed. My old cat is better than all of them. She comes and sits upon my couch and I look into her eyes. When the pupil is a thin line, up and down, it is noon ; when half round and largest at the bottom, it is near sundown ; when largest at the

top, it is breakfast. When it is a perfect circle and yellow like amber, it is midnight. When her hair is long and shiny, it is the new-year's time. When it comes out all over my clothes and makes me angry, it is time for the breaking of the ground; and



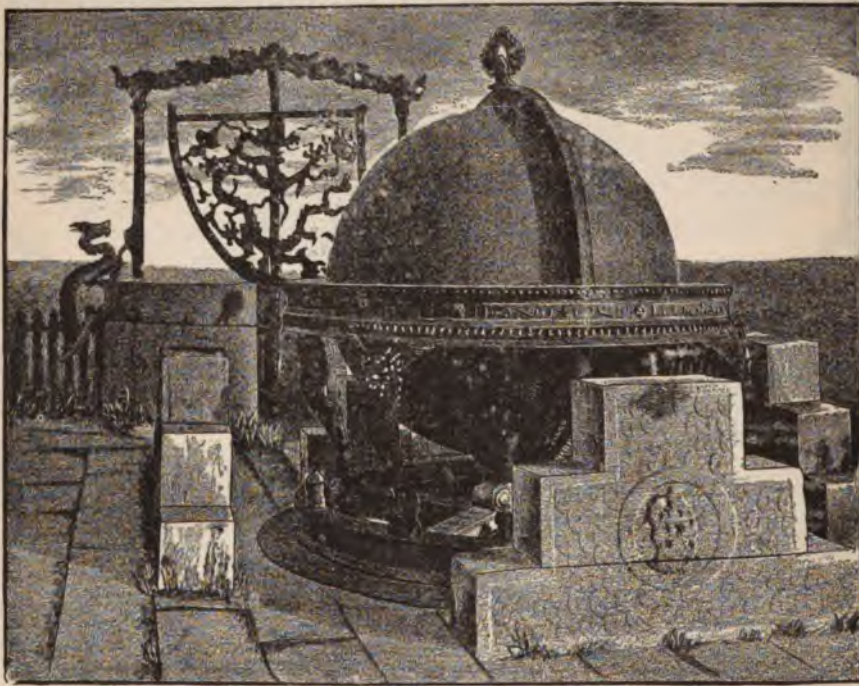
FROM THE OBSERVATORY.

as for an eclipse, what do I care when the dragon tries to swallow the sun or sit upon the moon. He cannot do it. He will give it up as he always does, and the sun will shine again, and so will the moon. It is all nonsense and absurdity."

Then again there was silence for a moment, for the dinner was over, the dishes were gone, the astronomical contrivances

were carried away, and they were sipping tea, and the governor and secretary were smoking pipes, and the boys waiting very impatiently for a word about going to Hong-Kong. Suddenly, again, the governor looked up, and from his girdle producing a carefully folded sheet of paper, he exclaimed, —

“You say that you come from the West.”



ANOTHER ECCENTRICITY.

“We come from the East; from America, from where the sun rises,” Scott replied.

“It is all the same. It is only one of the humbugs of your crazy ideas of astronomy. How can it be east and west at once? It is absurd. Yet it is. You may go with the sun or go against it. You reach America. It does not matter. It

is your science which is wrong, which is absurd, which is ridiculous. Now, I do not believe you come from America, or anywhere else. You are my honorable guests. You illumine my house. I must say that, for this is China. But I am not Chinese. I am neither Manchou, Mongol, or Tartar. I have trodden the bare rocks of Siberia; I have felt the parched wastes of Tartary. I rule as but the fourth power from the Son of Heaven, but I am none of them. I know Confucius, but he was not my father. I hold in my hand over twenty million lives, all men of China, but neither was I born nor bred to the soil of this greatest, grandest, and most powerful realm of earth. Hence, when I have done my duty to the rites and to my foster-brother, I do my duty to myself and say with the frankness of the bold crags of Thibet, that I do not believe you. With the honesty of the Persian princes of the house of Tamerlane, I tell you you are frauds. All white men are liars. They came to India and ruined it. They made the people slaves and dogs. The princes lie in the gutters, the people wallow in the mire. This was because my ancestors treated the white men tenderly and gave them all they asked. They covered them with clothes and roofs and riches. Vile imposters; they turned upon them and ate them up. What I should do would be to take each man with a white face, who came to China, and hang him, by the feet, under the city gate. He will ruin China if the Empire cradles him."

"White men are not all English. White men are not all bad," gasped Tao-sen, falling upon his face before the governor, trembling from head to foot before the ghastly fate which to his timid eyes already appeared completed. But he only received a kick from the governor, which, however, was so much less than he expected that he did not move, but lay

prostrate at his feet. And after all it was quite the proper thing for him to do. That any one knows who has ever been in a Celestial court-room.

"Are you what you profess to be?" exclaimed the governor, in a stern voice.

"We are Americans!" replied Scott.

"Read that!" demanded the governor, handing him the folded paper.

Scott's hand trembled as he took the paper. What could it be? a condemnation? a death warrant? The cold perspiration stood upon his forehead. His eyes were dimmed with tears. He could scarcely see at first, but as he looked longer, astonishment held him in silence.

"Read!" thundered the governor. And with a voice which was scarcely more than a whisper, Scott began,—

"A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z."

"What is it?" demanded the governor.

"It is the alphabet, from which our words are made," said Scott.

"Nonsense! a lie!" replied the governor; "would you tell me that all the words you know how to write are made up of those things there?"

"These are the twenty-six letters which make all our words."

"And how many words have you?"

"I do not know. A great many thousand."

"Liar!" replied the governor. "It is impossible. But I will ask you one thing more. Are your relatives king and princes in America? Have they mountains of gold and silver and precious stones, which they will send me in great shiploads if I tell them where you are?"

"My father is rich," said Scott, "but he is not a prince or a king. He is not very rich. He would be glad to have me safe at home, and we should be glad to be there. But I do not think



"HI YI! YA HAI!"

he could pay you what you would call much money. He has not even a very small sampan full of money. I am sure of that, and as for precious stones, he has none." Scott did not notice the pleading eyes which the poor Tao-sen turned toward

him from his position on the floor. He could only move his head, for one of the governor's feet rested heavily upon his shoulder.

"Then this dog has lied," said the governor, fiercely, "and I well knew he lied. Hi, you!" and he caught Tao-sen fiercely by the queue. "I've some English shears here, which I keep for just such wretches," and lifting a bright and vicious pair of nickel-plated scissors, he prepared to cut off the queue close to the poor fellow's head.

Then, for the first time since the wreck of the "Tigress," Tao-sen gave vent to the wail wrung from him by the ghost in the opium hold, and clasping his hands over that precious queue, he howled, "Hi! yi! Ya! ha!"

And what had Paul been doing all this time? Why, any one who saw him must have thought he was as ignorant as possible, and as careless, about what was going on. He had been wandering about the room like any other boy only seven years old, looking here and there at everything new, fingering curious things which he had no right to finger, edging behind screens when the subjects became warm, coming into sight again when the conversation was not so loud. But he was thinking and thinking all the time, delving about in his little brain, just as his fingers were delving about among the curious ornaments. He was a little general, in a very little way all his own, regulating his forces, and plotting and planning how he could make them most effective. He was behind an ornamented screen with a beautiful stork painted upon it, examining a long sword, when Tao-sen shouted, "Hi! yi! Ya! ha!" The sword reminded him of the old one which Dhondaram had carried into the Himalaya Mountains, when he so suddenly transformed himself from a humble Muni to a ferocious brigand chief; and indeed,

if Paul had only known it, it was one of the same order, and one which the governor before him knew from experience how to use. But Paul was thinking of Dhondaram. He was living with Dhondaram again, as his little hands wandered over the ugly sword. He was a part of Dhondaram as he heard the cry of Tao-sen. What wonder, then, that he forgot any little military precision of action which might have been forming in his mind, and, sword in hand, sprang from behind the screen, not ten feet from the governor, with his little battle-cry, "You stop!"

The governor looked up in astonishment. He hardly knew whether to be angry or to laugh at the golden head tossed defiantly in the air, at the blue eyes flashing so fiercely, and the little white hands clasping the long sword. He did not cut off the queue, but said to the secretary, that he might translate it to Paul, "That sword is a dangerous thing for him to touch. It has drawn the white man's blood on the plains of Cashmere, and cut the life of western devils on the Lama rocks of Shipki."

To his surprise Paul did not wait for an interpreter. He had not understood it all, by any means, but enough to catch with his quick ear the fact that the sword was, in reality, a relic from the very land where he and Dhondaram had lived that wild life together in North India, and forgetting all else,



"YOU STOP!"

with a cry of joy, he touched the hilt to his forehead. Then he replied in Chinese:—

“ I am not afraid of it. I have touched its brother.”

The well-known sign of reverence, the joyful recognition, the sound of the Chinese language from the rosy lips, more than the words themselves, astounded the governor, and again, still bewildered, and doubting he asked:—

“ You have seen one like it? You have learned to speak the language of China? Did you learn a word of the language of the Moguls, did you listen to the tongue of him who held its brother?”

It had all come over Paul like a great wave out of that strangely happy past, when his life was the throbbing heart of the Muni, and almost without realizing what the governor had said, he began in clear and liquid Hindustani: “ Yes, I have crossed the Cashmere valley. I have tasted the Water of Life at Amritza. I have eaten the salt of the Lamas above Shipki. I have touched the brother of this sword. I know the voice of its owner. I have slept upon the arm of my own Dhondaram! I am not afraid of you!”

Afraid! It was Scott's turn to stand there petrified; the secretary's turn to be aghast; Tao-sen's turn to wonder and wonder, till his eyes were so wide open that, Chinese as they were, they were almost round; till his mouth was so wide open that his tongue could scarcely keep its place.

With the first words which Paul had spoken the governor had started to his feet. Drawn as though by the charm of a serpent, he had crept nearer and nearer, till, as the Muni's name sounded, he had fallen upon his knees and pressed Paul's hand upon his forehead, to his lips, and upon his breast, muttering the old benediction of Islam, and Paul, as though

all his nature were transformed to that foster reality again, solemnly repeated the response. Then the governor rose from his knees and left the room, followed by the secretary.

“Great Cæsar’s ghost!” said Scott, in a low voice. “What was the matter with him?”

“I don’t know,” replied Paul, looking up, with his blue eyes full of dreams and tears. “I guess he knew Dhondaram, and if he did, of course he’d act funny to find I knew him, too. Dhondaram was a big man, and everybody who was bad was afraid of him.”

They remained there, wondering, for half an hour. It was growing dark. Servants came in and lit the tapers in the colored lanterns. Then the secretary entered alone, and said he had been instructed to return with them to the communal palace, and remain with them; that the governor would call upon them there, the next day, and in the mean time make arrangements for sending them, with the utmost speed and in all the luxury the province could command, to the city of Hong-Kong, and that orders had already been sent to the communal palace to prepare the most elaborate apartments for them, as the governor greatly regretted having provided so poorly for his illustrious guests.

CHAPTER XVIII.

NIGHT SCENES IN A GREAT CITY.

THUS were the tables turned at the very instant when everything looked most dark and gloomy and threatening. When they expected nothing they found the most; even the palanquins which waited for them at the door were more beautiful than those in which they came. Instead of two bearers and a relief, each palanquin had four bearers; instead of two common servants for escort, they had a dozen armed soldiers. Instead of a small row-boat to take them over the narrow arm of the lake to the main wharf, they were carried right in the palanquins, out to a royal junk, hung with lanterns and moved by a great bamboo sail, assisted by a dozen boatmen. This was more as it should be, and Tao-sen was in his glory.

While they were on the junk the secretary presented Paul with a little case of silver, beautifully carved, a gift from the governor. The lid flew open with a little spring, and there, upon a soft bed of satin, lay two pearls, bound together with a silver network. As Paul looked at them in the light of the lanterns, tears came into his blue eyes. He was sorry for the thoughts he had harbored against the governor of Kweilin. He could even have kissed him now; he needed no explanation from the secretary to tell him that two pearls, bound together in that way, were indicative of a friendship which could not be broken. Possibly he did not know the Chi-

nese meaning fully; but two pearls like that he had often seen about the neck of Dhondaram. They told him of some league between the fierce and haughty governor of Kweilin and the fiercer and more haughty man who seemed to Paul to be governor, ruler, and king wherever he chose to set his foot, or lift his hand. If the governor of Kweilin loved Dhondaram, Paul loved him, no matter what he might be beside.

As they neared the public landing, a mandarin's funeral procession passed down the street. They were beginning to light the lanterns in the procession, though the gloaming over the lake still gave light enough to see all that could be distinguished in the mass. It was the funeral of a very rich man, for the procession was evidently the result of an almost fabulous expenditure of money. First in the procession walked the mourners, all in white, with strips of white braided in their queues even; on either side walked a long line of family servants, carrying many peculiar and most incongruous articles, simply to display wealth and make the parade more pompous. They all wore white girdles; then came a man who acted as leader, beating a great gong with all his might. Ostensibly it was to show the procession which way to go, but really it was to call people from all other streets and lanes and blind alleys to come and see what a grand funeral was being given by the relatives of the dead. Then came the hired mourners, who wailed and howled and cried; the mourners were followed by a band of men throwing right and left little pieces of bronze paper, pierced with holes, to imitate money. This was because evil demons are supposed to follow the coffin toward the grave, eager to take possession of the spirit which is believed to remain very near the body till it is buried; but it is acknowledged that these demons are even more mercenary than men;

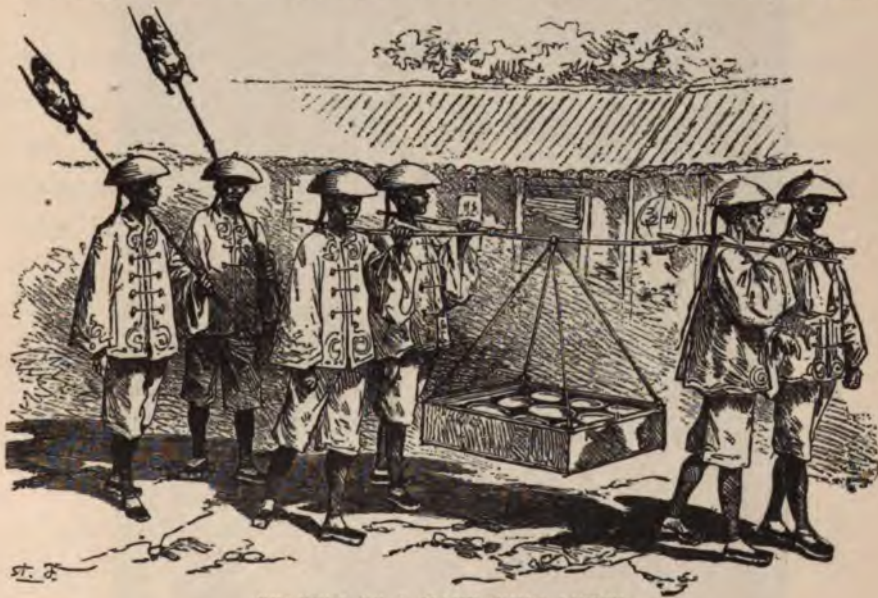
they will do anything or go anywhere for money, and, best of all, as the boys already knew, the demons did not know the difference between real money and imitation sapecks, so that these bits of bronzed cardboard did just as well. They



THE GRAND FUNERAL.

were thrown upon both sides of the road, and of course the demons would stop to gather them up. This would take so long that before their mercenary greed was satisfied the coffin

would have reached its destination, and they would find themselves cheated out of their prize. Then came the coffin, borne in an enormous palanquin, under a great and gorgeous canopy, with gold and silver ornaments, and great horns at the corners, and dragons' heads everywhere, and streamers of silk all covered with mottoes; and before it were men with musical instruments, making the most terrific and horrible noise which was possible.



BEARERS OF A MANDARIN'S LUNCH.

Without waiting to see or hear more, the boys in their palanquins started down a street which led away from the confusion. It was a very warm night, and as there was no danger of troublesome interference from the crowds, with the guard of soldiers about them, they left the doors of the palanquins open, and as long as the street was wide enough they rode side by side. One might think that where the streets are crowded, as they always are in China, and every one walks in the middle of the street, simply because there is nothing but middle, it

would have been hard for three palanquins to proceed abreast; but one whom the governor wishes to honor above all his guests will find no trouble from crowded streets in China.



CLEARING A PASSAGE.

On the wharf awaiting them sat a Chinese horseman, in a bright uniform and helmet; a ferocious, villanous, savage-looking man, but he knew his duty well, and there was no danger that one who saw and heard him would fail to take his advice

and get himself out of the way as quickly as possible; for that was his duty, and he rode at the head of the little party. But lest some one should fail to move quickly enough, there were soldiers on either side, with spears to prick them up to duty. On his broad breast was a painted dragon, in itself fierce enough to have frightened any one at all timid into the first blind alley on either side.

Thus as the day turned suddenly into night and the streets grew very black, except for the glare of the lanterns, the party advanced toward the communal palace. Suspended on high poles, in an open square, they saw curiously colored Chinese lanterns, swinging far too high up to give any light in the street below.

"Are they up there for a light-house?" asked Scott.

"Not at all. They are to call evil spirits from a distance, and show them where food has been placed for them."

"You don't mean you feed them as well as supply them with pocket money?"

"Most assuredly, and why not?"

"I should think it would be better to let them go starve to death. 'T would be the quickest way to get rid of them."

"But if we did not feed them they would feed themselves. They would come into our houses for food; they would be angry that they must take that trouble, and would help themselves, to our injury."

"Well, it's a wasteful thing to throw away a good dinner, I think," said Scott, decidedly.

"It is not good at all," replied the secretary, pleasantly, as though it were really a very bright idea. "It is the poorest stuff in the market. The evil spirits do not know the difference. Then in the morning it is given to the poor of the city."

"Cæsar!" replied Scott.

Then the procession entered a more crowded part of the city, where the streets were so narrow that they must advance single file, and where the pigs and the beggars, who did not care a straw for the ugly fellow riding on horseback, were so thick that they were obliged to go very slowly. But they emerged again from this quarter upon broader streets, and as the palanquins once more came together, and they again opened the sliding doors which they had closed to shut out the bad odors, the boys discovered a strange light falling all about them from some unseen source. Leaning out of the palanquins they found the entire sky brilliant, just beyond them, with a most wonderful display. There were dragons of all sorts and sizes, and goblins with wings and goblins without wings, and horrible things and furious things, and things which were not like anything, and yet were something, all floating, some very high up in the air, and some just above the pagoda towers; some perfectly still in the air, some diving and whirling about, and all of them glowing with soft light, made of light, light itself, and apparently nothing but light.

Paul shouted in ecstasy, but Scott, of a more practical turn, looked to the secretary for an explanation.

"It is part of a marriage festival," he replied. "There are six great rites to be observed and celebrated. First, the alliance must be made. This is done by some mutual friend of the parents of a male and female child. The next is the proclamation of the name and age of the girl, for both must be unknown to the parents of the boy when the marriage contract is made. Then is the consulting of oracles as to the deserts of such a union. The fourth is the exchange of presents. The fifth is to appoint a marriage day. The sixth is the going of the bride to

her husband's house, clad in a veil from head to foot, and in a sealed palanquin, that her husband may not see her till the final ceremony is complete."



CURIOUS SIGHTS IN THE AIR.

"Well, what part of the six stages do all these flaming dragons represent?" asked Scott, as they drew nearer and he could see that they were really curious kites of all fashions and sizes, with lanterns secreted about them.

“ This is the last stage, the marriage night. The groom has gone from his house to the house of the bride’s father to conduct her palanquin, and his friends are preparing to welcome the return.”



RECEIVING A BRIDE.

“ Are they always married at night? ”

“ Not at all. It is only a custom of the north. Doubtless the bridegroom is from the north, and for him the custom is observed.”

“ Well, what has the bridegroom gone to the bride’s house for, if she must come to his to be married ? ”

“ There are certain ceremonies which must first be performed there. They must kneel together, first, before her parents, and adore the heavens and earth.”

“ And did you say he did n’t see her, all this time ? ”

“ He must not see her. He cannot see her. No, not till the last ceremony at his father’s house has been performed.”

“ Well, I’ve heard in America that marriage was a lottery, but I say, if *that’s* the way you do it *here*, it’s a regular ‘sight unseen’ that beats us all to pieces.”

“ The pupil can but approximate the master who teaches him. The world can but follow in the footsteps of the nation which takes the lead.”

This the secretary said with the utmost sincerity and solemnity, and Scott, to his horror, found that his little joke was taken as a most serious compliment by the Chinese secretary.

“ But what if he don’t like her, when she takes off her veil. I suppose she does take it off *sometime*, don’t she ? ” he added.

“ When they reach the bridegroom’s house,” said the secretary, “the future husband unlocks the door of her palanquin, and after assisting her to her feet he walks before her through the court to the saloon where the banquet is prepared. There the husband stands upon the north and the wife upon the south, she salutes him four times, and he salutes her twice. They each take a glass of wine and drink a part. Then they empty what remains into one cup and each drink half. When she lifts her veil, if they should be greatly pleased with each other they have been known to fall into each other’s arms ;

but this is very wrong, and should not be allowed till each has accompanied the other to all the near relatives and saluted them."

"It must be an all-day job to get one's self well married in China," said Scott.

"It takes about four days," replied the secretary, solemnly.

"Great Cæsar!" groaned Scott. "And then if he don't like her, or she don't like him after that, what's to pay?"



SOMETHING VERY WRONG.

"They *must*," replied the secretary.

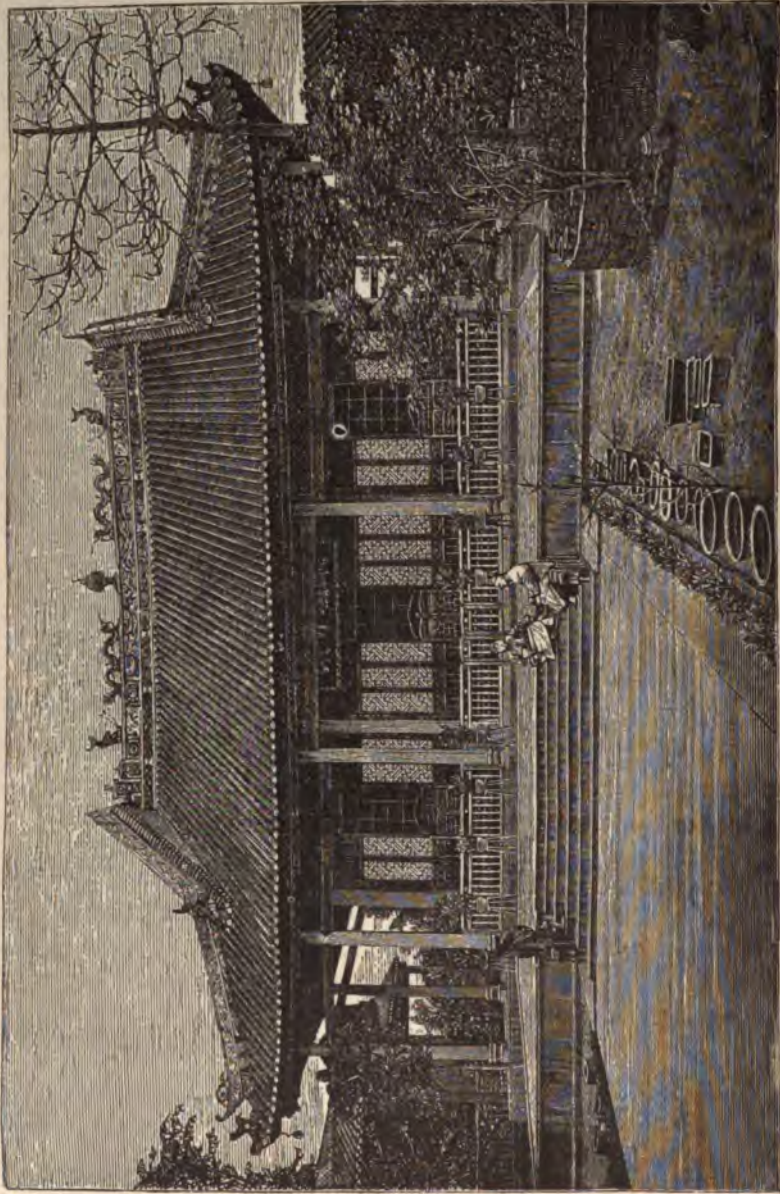
"Well," Scott added, after a moment's thought, "I should n't think many of you would have more than one wife, with all that fuss."

The conversation was more interesting to Scott than to Paul, and lasted for some time, while Scott continued making mental memoranda to give his mother to use in her society; chief among which were two Chinese proverbs, "When you

are angry, break the windows of your house, but not your wife's head, for it costs but a hundred sapecks to get a new window," and "If your wife and your mother are drowning, save your mother, for you cannot get another."

But the old secretary was much more fond of talking of antiquity, and of the great empire and its great developments, and the more he talked the more Scott became impressed with the fact that it was not such a very great empire after all, and that science was scarcely developed at all. He made a very great mistake. He made the same mistake which hundreds and thousands of Europeans are making all the while, and which prevails in America. He judged China and all that there was to China by that white-mustached specimen close beside his palanquin. And it is quite true, as they all say, that in modern science China is behind the age, so far, in fact, that there is no *word*, even, in the entire language, to designate some of the later arts and sciences. But how much did our own ancestors know, only two hundred years ago, of geology and chemistry, of philosophy and anatomy? What did our grandfathers, even, ever dream of steamboats and railways and telegraphs? If we should make the system of judgment by which we judge China a basis by which to gauge the world, and go back a hundred years, we should find that the old secretary was not far from right.

They passed a host of shop-men on their way to their homes for the night, carrying their shops and all their goods on their shoulders, — even restaurant-keepers, with their stoves and kitchens and pantries, their pots and dishes, their fuel and stock of food, all in a single contrivance or collection of contrivances, balanced upon their backs, — and at last arrived at the communal palace to find the great gate which they had



BETTER QUARTERS.

never entered open wide and hung with lanterns; to find an array of servants kneeling on either side, and the great pavilion all a blaze of light and bright colors, with a lunch of welcome, deliciously cool fruit, and hot tea and steaming lemonade awaiting them.

This was very much more to Tao-sen's taste. He felt of his pig-tail, to be sure it was there, then stretching himself



A COMMON STREET RESTAURANT.

out, like a little chicken about to crow for the first time, he threw out one hand in a tragical manner and exclaimed:—

“ My namee blong Norval !
 Top-sidee Kelampian hillee
 My fadder chow-chow he sheep.”

Scott brought his fine recital to a stand-still by snapping a melon seed straight into his open mouth, and very nearly choking him to death. Poor Tao-sen! He was afflicted on every hand. He was tormented by spirits, abused by real

mortals, and even accidents had to happen, when there was nothing else to trouble him. But he recovered from the melon seed at last, and soon they were all as forgetful of those more gorgeous quarters as they had been the night before of their humbler apartment.

Scott slept soundly. He was strong and young. The wear and tear told only on his muscles, and made him hungry and sleepy. It never struck the nerves rudely, to make them vibrate in discords long afterward. A good supper, and a good night's sleep, made him as good as new again. But Paul was of a different composition. It seemed a very little thing, only the work of ignorant excitement, for him to leap from behind the screen and tell the savage governor of Kweilin that he was not afraid of him; but in reality he knew more of the magnitude of the act than one might have supposed; and only the cry of a living thing being abused by a stronger power, calling all his little heroism to the front, forced him to face the man who was cruel to Tao-sen. It was another wrenching of a child's nerves, and too many such were sure to tell. He tossed restlessly upon his low bed. He woke continually, to find some dream only a plaything with which his brain had been amusing itself while its master was sleeping. They were not all disagreeable dreams, not all of China; but the spiteful little nerves, which had been overtaxed ever since the wreck of the "Tigress," would always succeed in twisting everything, no matter how pleasant it was to begin with, into an ugly shape at last. He stood on the beach at Beverly, watching the waves, but there were Chinese dragons in the sky, all colored like tangled rainbows, and there were fiercer dragons in the water, making it bubble and boil. Then the dragons in the sky came down and the dragons in the water came up, and

the wicked nerves gave way for a moment, and instead of dragons he saw the gentlest, kindest of faces, all light above and water beneath, coming out of the waves. He had never



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PAUL'S DREAM.

seen it before, yet he knew it was the good Sea-King, and even in his dreams he wondered how he had been so foolish as to listen to Tao-sen when he told him about the dragons. He wished Tao-sen was there; he wanted him to see the beau-

tiful reality of the mystery of the sea. Then suddenly in those kind features he seemed to recognize the stern face of Dhondaram. Crying out in his sleep, he opened his arms, as he had once before in the howling mob in Delhi, to clasp them about the neck of his invincible protector. But something held him back. He started! he stared! Oh, it was a very ugly dream at last! Tao-sen held him by the arm. The night-lamp filled the room with a faint, warm glow. His eyes were wide open. Could he be sleeping? Not far from his bed one of the shell windows stood half open. Oh, the fierce face which was framed in it! The Sea-King? No! Dhondaram? No! There were bushy beard and bushy hair, and fiercely bright eyes, and savagely white teeth between them. Who?

"Hi! yi! Ya! ha!" shrieked Tao-sen.

'What's the matter? What's the matter?' cried Scott, starting from his bed and rubbing his eyes open.

Paul did not answer. Tao-sen did not answer. He only pointed with a trembling hand to the open window.

"Who left that window open? Paul will catch cold!" said Scott, angrily; and, still half asleep, he pushed his way across the room and shut the window with a bang. There was nothing but blackness there. "What's the matter with you, Ling? Shut up, and let a fellow sleep," he added, looking again at Tao-sen.

"Dattee he!" groaned Tao-sen.

"Who?" demanded Scott, fiercely.

"Ghost!" replied Tao-sen.

"Get out!" said Scott, as he threw himself on to his bed again. "Might have known the ghosts would come in if you left a north window open at night. They'd do that even in America, and steal your health away, instead of making for your

pantry. Hope you've caught a good cold to pay you for forgetting that window. But you Chinese are too tough to catch cold. Is Paul covered up?" And as he thus roused himself a little he got up again, and came over to the bed where Paul lay trembling. He was cold. Scott was alarmed. "Confound you, Ling. I'd like to thrash you for howling that way. You frightened me enough, but you've scared Paul worse. Lie down now and keep still about your ghosts, or you can sleep somewhere else after this."

Tao-sen apparently obeyed; at least, with a shiver he sank upon the floor, and the floor anywhere was his bed, while his own arm acted as pillow; and Scott lay down with Paul, and soon was sound asleep again.

Scott woke early in the morning, however, to find Paul not cold, but in a high fever. He spoke to him, but with a shudder Paul turned away, and muttered something about dragons. He took the little hand which lay uneasily on the blanket. Paul started, sat up in bed, and cried, "Dhondaram! O Dhondaram!"

Suddenly Scott realized that his little brother was delirious.

CHAPTER XIX.

IN THE JAWS OF THE DRAGON.

THE secretary was warned, and full of alarm he soon appeared. The whole communal palace was stirred to its very foundation; and all knew that by some carelessness the north window had been left open through the night, and that the evil spirits had come in. In reality it was due to the most natural causes,—over-burdening of nature with too many changes of climate and food, over-burdening of nerves with too much straining; but simplicity is not a principle of Chinese science; everything must be complex, intricate.

The governor was notified at once, and never did he respond more quickly to a royal command from the Emperor. He came with the palace doctors in all their gravity and dignity, and with all the luxuries which a Chinese provincial court could command, to minister to the little friend of Dhondaram.

And Scott. Shall we follow Scott through those hours of agony? Could we follow him if we would? Have you a half-baby brother who is all the world to you? Have you not suffered for him, more even than he suffered when he was in pain? Have you ever realized how infinitely dearer he became, how much more intense the agony to you, if the little life went fading, fading away before your aching heart and eyes, till the door of death seemed standing ajar, so that a chance breath, blowing from the grave, would have opened it? Can you think how all the intensity of your feeling would have been increased

at that hour, had one after another of the dear friends about you disappeared; father, mother, loving friends, and skilled physicians, home and all its never-equalled comforts gone, and you alone had stood by the bed, far away in the interior of China? Can you? Then perhaps you can stand by Scott, and feel his heart beating with heavy, painful throbs, and see his eyes, sunken and tearless, watching; watching day and night each motion, each breath, of the little loved one lying there. You know why his cheeks grew paler and paler, as the bright flush on the cheek upon the pillow grew brighter and brighter. Helpless to aid, and with no one to turn to for assistance, — the bitterest pang of all suffering! That was Scott's share. You may think it, live it all to yourself, perhaps, but pen cannot tell it to you. Yet count it not forgetful of the agony which filled one heart if that side of the sick-bed be left entirely to imagination, while we look simply at the other side, upon which the Chinese are gathered.

The governor came in all eagerness and anxiety. That unwritten pledge, stronger than the vows of the Masonic fraternity, called upon him to exert every effort which duty and love could suggest for one whose life had come within the charmed circle which surrounded the brigand Muni. To the governor of Kweilin China was but a foster-land. Though strictly Chinese from his birth and parentage upon the Thibetan slopes of the Himalayas, his family through long generations had brought in their veins the fierce blood of the house of Tamerlane. The fire of Zoroaster, which never ceases to burn, glowed on the altars of their Persian ancestors, and was only fanned into fiercest flame when the sword of Mohammed swept through the land, and Tamerlane, grasping its hilt, scaled the great wall of Bramha, with its turret towers reaching nearly

30,000 feet heavenward, and became the master of India. It only blazed afresh and more brightly still when the house of Tamerlane had fallen before the English; and Nana Sahib and Dhondaram and many another descendant caught the embers, and covered them with oil in the fierce struggle of the Mutiny. It only glowed and hissed more venomously, when driven back into the heart of Dhondaram and a few followers. Among them was the father of the governor of Kweilin, chief of Chinese Thibet, the headquarters of the refugees; he was brother in blood, more than brother in fierce hatred against the white man. Who has not heard of the death without mercy which even now overtakes any traveller so bold as to venture far beyond Shipki? Even a Chinese imperial safe-conduct is of no avail there. They will not bide the white man under any conditions. Such was the home where the governor was born, and in his father's rude clay palace he had seen the fierce Nana sheltered, he had heard the councils of the warrior Dhondaram. He had been taught to worship them. His growing arm had been trained to wield the sword of their order. He had carried his skill into the Tai-ping rebellion in China, and almost unwittingly had become a power, felt even in Pekin. He had been recognized as a strong arm in the empire, had been made governor of Kweilin. Then suddenly the old blood was stirred again. White strangers were in his power. They were helpless in his palace. He hated them. He could have torn them to pieces with his own hands, and laughed as doing a good service to the world. But in the very act of raking up the coals of his rage, that the fire should burn more brightly and make the vengeance more sweet, from those parted lips which he had planned to silence forever he had heard a charmed watchword; he had listened to that well-known tongue;

he had recognized even the very accents of the savage chief; he had seen a pale cheek which had been pillowed on the arm of Dhondaram, and lived; he had pressed upon his forehead the hand which had shared salt with his people in Thibet. The reaction reached an even greater extreme. With the pearls of undying friendship he had parted. And now with the same eagerness he sought the sick-bed.

The chief doctor of the court gravely took his position by the bed. He was the most renowned doctor in the province, one to whom the performance of prodigies was but second nature. All—mandarins, servants, high officers, and other doctors—looked in silence toward the grave being, who, in tragic and highly dramatic unconsciousness, sat looking vaguely at Paul. Before this doctor arrived they had all whispered their opinions one to another, and all in the most learned and technical terms had arranged the whole matter between themselves. The equilibrium of the vital spirits was disturbed, they said, and indeed there was no doubt of it. The igneous principle, chilled by the north wind, had reacted in the returning balance, and exceeded far beyond all propriety. Thus a fire was kindled within. The liquid portions of the body were already dried up. The fire was consuming the vital elements; and unless it could be extinguished, life must soon depart, and a poor fragment, burned out within, like a lamp without oil, be all that remain. And in the main they were not very far from right. Extract the complexity of their argument, and in simple fact they were quite correct. But how to do it? For that they must wait the great and wonderful court doctor. And thus they sat and stood about him, in silence, while he sat in silence by the bed. Green peas, cucumbers, and melons, every one knows, are possessed of the coolest properties, and without

waiting for orders, the cook was already preparing a soup from these three articles.

Like all other very great and very wise Chinese, the doctor wore a very large pair of spectacles, in very large wooden frames, over his very little nose. A sparse gray beard covered his face, which was round and fat, and his hair, gathered into the queue, was white.



THE GOVERNOR BENT FORWARD AND LISTENED.

Paul spoke. It was in Hindustani. The governor bent forward and listened. "Wait for me. Wait for me. I am coming. I am coming, Dhondaram," he murmured. The governor clinched his fingers fiercely into the palms of his hands. "You said you were coming early, and now it is late. The fire burned me, the water drowned me, my heart melted while I waited for you. But he cannot harm me now. He

cannot follow me again. He cannot take me back. No! no! I am yours! I am yours! He gave me to you. You have made me your Hari. Hold me! Hold me tighter, hold me faster! Oh, my own Dhondaram!"

The governor drew back his silk robes to his shoulder, baring his powerful arm that it might be like that of the Muni's, and as Paul spoke he gently placed it under his head, almost as tenderly as Dhondaram could have done it, and whispered, "Nothing shall harm the Hari of Dhondaram."

Paul breathed a sigh, pressed his cheek close against the bare arm, and laid his soft white hand upon it.

A smile of triumph lit the stern features of the governor of Kweilin, as there, among his officers, who had never known him bend the knee to friend or foe, who had ever known him as the fiercest enemy of Western devils, as a man to whom command and authority were ingredients of his very nature, whom none could bend a hair's-breadth, none dared for a moment to gain-say, as there he knelt beside a little bed, and patiently made of his arm a pillow for a little pale face to rest upon.

The doctor began to speak, and all looked eagerly toward him; though it was very evident that he was talking to himself, knowing perfectly well that they were listening, and quite intending them to hear his words of wisdom and marvel over them, but in his extraordinary modesty appearing thoroughly unconscious of any existence but his own, and seeming to care not a straw for anything but his own bright ideas.

"I have discovered," said he, and all great men say "I have discovered," where simpler men say "I notice" or "I see," "that the honorable birth of the illustrious patient occurred on the opposite side of the earth." Every one in the room drew a tremulous breath, set the doctor up a peg higher in their esti-

mations, and let themselves down a peg lower in their private opinions. Of course he was born on the opposite side of the earth, so far as their ideas of opposite meant really opposite, and not simply antagonistic, and therefore, of course, the treatment as well as the disease would of necessity be just opposite to what it seemed to them to be, and what it would be if Paul were a Chinese.

Why had no one thought of that before? Each one mentally thought the rest were stupid fools to have overlooked such a radically important fact. As the result, all their reasoning was wrong, and their conclusions were absolutely wrong. Even the cook, who had been standing in the door, no sooner heard this first sentence than he hastened forthwith to order the soup of melons and cucumbers and green peas to be taken from the fire, and placed at the palace gate for the poor to partake of.

The doctor kindly waited till his ignored audience had mastered the mystery of this first statement fully, then he continued: "Every land has its own maladies, and every country produces that which if completely understood would be an absolute and unerring cure. The skilful physician should discern and discover these conflicting eccentricities. It is that in which his science consists."

Again a tremulous murmur could be more felt than heard about the room, as every one now perfectly and clearly realized that they did not see before simply because it was not in their sphere, and that they had no business to see; and as soon as every one had had time to forgive himself for having thought himself stupid, which no one had, the doctor continued, "We shall take good care not to treat those from the West as those from the Middle Kingdom.

He then laid his fingers gently on Paul's right wrist, and began moving them as though playing upon a piano. This was because he believed, with all great and small medical practitioners in China; that there are different pulses, corresponding with the principal organs of the body, one from the heart, one from the lungs, one from the stomach, and so through the list. By carefully comparing them they are able to locate the trouble, and know its extent. Very long he sat there, studying first one arm and then the other, till a frown had gathered over the governor's forehead. As a Chinaman he was never in haste, any more than any other Chinese, but this incident had turned the old floods of his life into the new channels, and as a Tibetan mountaineer again, as a brigand warrior once more, he forgot the Chinese proverb that "he who would do the work of two days in one cuts his own tablet," and thought only of the popular answer among the hills, "He who runs slips forward. He who walks slips backward."

At last the doctor left his tapping on the little wrist, and continued:—

"By some means the cold has entered the interior. It has taken possession of every organ. We must combat the enemy with warm principles."

The cook thanked fortune that his cold soup was off the fire, that no one might see it and make of him a laughing-stock. And every one in the room began to denounce the ignorance of his neighbor for having declared that the cold principle was wanted. This was quite possible, for almost every one in the room had declared it. The doctor continued:—

"This illustrious malady is of such a nature that it may yield to the force of drugs, but also that it may not." He

turned to the governor and added, solemnly, "This is my opinion, after having studied the case with the utmost care."

No wonder the doctor gained a great reputation for the accuracy of his insight, if all his opinions were as lucid, clear, and emphatic as this.

The governor frowned a little more deeply, and simply replied, "Apply the warm principle instantly."

The doctor moved to one side, where writing materials had been prepared. He dipped a stick of India ink in a cup of tea, and rubbed it on a little dish; then with the brush he began to write. He covered an entire sheet; and there are parts of China where it would have been considered quite sufficient to have boiled that sheet of paper in a pot of soup for the patient to drink; but not so in the enlightened capital of Kweilin. In reality that paper was covered with the names of drugs, and drugs which were intended to be beneficial. Some of them were precisely the same which the greatest doctor of New York or Boston would have used for precisely the same case. The peculiarity was that this Chinese doctor had delved into everything, — every nook and corner of the little constitution, — and finding the whole tiny frame more or less disturbed, he had endeavored to arrive at a knowledge of each, and to prescribe the proper remedy for each. There was a remedy for aching joints and one for aching muscles; one for the heart and one for the lungs; one for fever, one for chills, one for headache, one for a cold, and one for everything else; besides a few remedies which upon general principles are always good. All this combination was procured just as soon as the most important druggist of Kweilin could prepare the compound; and all together they were boiled for an hour in an earthen dish.

As a general thing the druggists of China are also the phy-

sicians. The doctor counts for nothing, and carefully prescribes, and then the servant is sent to his house, where he carefully prepares the prescription, and for that receives his pay. Had this doctor been any less than the palace physician of Kweilin, the course here would have been the same; and it may seem as though this custom would give an opportunity for the doctor to favor himself decidedly in the drugs he used and the prices he charged for them; but to prevent this it is the custom for the doctor's prescription to be like a restaurant bill of fare, where each article is marked with the price which will be charged for it. Before sending the servant it is also quite the custom for the family of the sick person, or even the patient himself, to go over the prescription carefully, and cross off the more expensive articles, according to their means.

This is so very truly Chinese that as an oft-repeated fact, after the doctor has read over his prescription to the family, and fought inch by inch over the properties of the drugs and their necessity to the case, crossed out one here and there, and abated on the price of the whole, till he has reached the last point, where he declares the rest absolutely necessary to save the life of the patient, — it is not at all uncommon, right in the sick-room, for another discussion to take place, one often joined in and sometimes conducted by the patient, as to whether the fatal appearance of the malady, or the advanced age of the sick person, or some other circumstances may not render it a useless extravagance to indulge in the medicine at all. Sometimes it is abandoned, after a careful consideration, and the patient is actually *consoled* with the assurance that the amount charged for the medicine will instead be laid aside, and added to the amount paid for the coffin and funeral. Since one must die sooner or later, it is often considered well worth

the poor man's while to think upon sacrificing a chance for a little longer life in favor of a better funeral.

In the case of little Paul, however, there was no such necessity. The prescription was prepared and cooked entire, and the unconscious sufferer drank it, while the great governor of Kweilin supported him. He drank it all, for his parched lips sought greedily anything which could moisten them. The day wore on, slowly and sadly enough, and the only effect of the medicine, or possibly only the effect of the sickness, was to produce a violent vomiting, which in itself was good, however, for the fever abated and Paul slept.

The governor remained at the communal palace, and so did the doctor and several of the mandarins. This was not, however, entirely out of any love for Paul, but out of their own individual anxiety; for such is the state of society and custom in China that while the governor might easily have condemned the strangers to death, and his will would have been executed without a murmur of disapproval, nay, with a feeling of satisfaction doubtless on the part of many, it was a very different and more complicated thing to have one of the strangers die in Kweilin. What if their friends should apply to the great government at Peking, and the royal officers should discover that the two had entered this capital under the protection of the government, and only one had gone away again? What answer could be returned? Dead! That is a poor reply in China. The governor of Kweilin would be held responsible, possibly to the extent of enormous damages.

The next morning the circumstances were somewhat changed, but the condition was even more alarming. The fever and sickness came and went, alternating incessantly, and leaving Paul weaker every hour. The third day the doctor

never left his side. The great man's reputation was very seriously threatened, and he began to talk about the incomprehensible intricacies of composition in the men of the western seas. The fourth day the little form lay on the couch with scarcely a motion. The doctor was more grave and silent, and less tragic and dramatic. He was grappling with a stern reality. He began to cast about him for some defence, when it should be spread abroad that he had failed. He examined the window which had been left open, and evidently endeavored to convey the impression that there was quite a possibility that an evil spirit had crept in, and taken possession of the child. "What skill of earth," said he, "can conflict with the powers of air and water?"

It might be thought that, with his nonsensical methods, a patient of this doctor might always be pronounced afflicted with some evil spirit which it was quite impossible to reach, and possibly it would not help the matter to declare again that he was one of the leading physicians of the empire. Yet it is a curious commentary upon the art that in crowded and poorly provided China the death-rate is no greater, proportionately, than it is in America. If doctors are really good for anything, it argues at least that they are not materially more awkward or unskilful in China than anywhere else.

On the fifth day the doctor began to talk less about the evil spirits, and less about the incomprehensible mixture making up European bodies, and more about the wonderful science he professed, and the wonderful way in which he professed it. It was the best of evidence that he thought the crisis passed, though he was very careful not to say so. But soon it became evident to every one that Paul was better; and Scott's strained nerves yielded. Paul turned in the little bed, and laid a moist,

cool hand in his brother's. He looked up into his eyes. He whispered, "Scott, I guess I've been sick, have n't I?"

Scott pressed the little hand to his lips. For six days and nights he had not left that place at the head of Paul's bed. He had hardly spoken, hardly eaten, hardly thought even, only suffered as one in that position must suffer, for those terrible six days and nights; but as he bent over Paul's hand the last thread of strength gave way. Paul did not realize it, fortunately, but Scott was carried away from the bed unconscious. When he came to himself it was only to realize that Paul was better, and would doubtless recover; and strong, proud boy though he was, he cried for joy. Tears rolled unbidden from his eyes, sob after sob shook even the bed. He cried till unwittingly he cried himself to sleep. The sun set, and still he slept; morning came, and Tao-sen roused him to eat something; but in reality he ate it in his sleep, and fell back again upon the pillow.

Nature was demanding her own in this case in a most gentle and tender way; and when at last Scott woke and found Paul much improved, and the communal palace once more quiet, the world, as if by magic, put on her beautiful garments again, and when Paul smiled everything became suddenly bright.

It was close upon the New Year's festival when Paul rode out again, this time in one of the governor's most beautiful palanquins, with four bearers; but the weather was warm as a New England summer. New Year's day in China is about the 1st of February, and one of the greatest holidays of the empire; but they call it Pass Year instead of New Year, for then they pass from one year to the next. For the market-men it is like a New England Thanksgiving. Every one purchases for feasting himself and his friends, and for sacrificing at the an-

cestral altar. Hosts of poor families, who all the year round never taste of animal food, will indulge in a fowl on New Year's day. That is a great day, too, for settling all accounts and paying debts. Bills *must* be paid on New Year's eve ; and if some poor merchant has so many debtors that he cannot make the rounds, or such slow debtors that he cannot settle with them all that day before New Year's, or such cunning debtors that he cannot find them, he has but one escape. He is allowed by common custom to carry on his work of collecting the next day, if he carry a lighted lantern in one hand, to signify to every one that so far as he is concerned it is still only the night before, and not yet New Year's morning.

This is the day too, when, though only once a year, *every* one wears good clothes. The rag-picker and beggar, who cannot afford even the dirty cloths which they bind over their bodies, will manage to save enough to hire from some one a suit of clothes for that day, which, in comparison with their usual rags at least, will be princely robes to them.

Instead of a watch-meeting to pray the old year out and the new year in, each family in China has a peculiar ceremony of sacrifice, and as the hour of midnight approaches, the head of each family kneels and thanks the old year for its benefits. Then, as the midnight passes, all the boys in China, and some children of a little larger growth, unite in firing crackers and setting off all sorts of fireworks. No Fourth of July in New England was half so noisy.

The celebration of New Year's season is kept up with more or less energy till the feast of lanterns, two weeks later, when, for a night, China is one grand illumination from the Wall to Malacca and the ocean to the mountains. All through these holidays lanterns appear for sale on every stand on every street,

and in every variety which all the peculiar whims of the Chinese can conjure. Some of them are elaborate works of art.

On the day of this feast of lanterns the governor's secretary went upon his yearly rounds to the charitable and benevolent institutions of Kweilin, carrying gifts of decorated lanterns to the poor who were sheltered there; and Scott and Paul, now almost as robust and well as ever, accompanied him.



THE PAGODA ON THE LAKE.

"It's like going round Boston with Easter cards," said Scott; and, indeed, he was not far from right. It is an old, very old custom in China, and is not the only old custom which has been remodelled for our use in America.

They went to the orphan asylum first, which a few years before had been established by the stern governor of Kweilin; there are thousands like it in China, where children are brought whose parents are too poor to support them, as well



A HOME FOR DISABLED ANIMALS.

as those who have no parents. Even in little country villages, far in the interior, one finds these orphan asylums. In Kweilin the building was large, and one of the most beautiful in the city, standing in the centre of an enormous garden on the hillside, overlooking the city and the lake beyond. Just above it stood a pagoda, and below it was another benevolent institution, an asylum for old men. There were over five hundred poor beings sheltered there, all over sixty-five years of age. But they appeared almost as happy to receive their lanterns as the boys and girls up the hill.

It required an entire half-day to complete the rounds of the Kweilin charitable homes, and when they came to an end the secretary conducted the boys to the most peculiar of all, and not the least valuable or suggestive, an institution such as has many a counterpart in China, but would be a prodigy and—yes, a laughing-stock in America; an “asylum for helpless and useless animals,” supported by a club of wealthy merchants of Kweilin. It was under the charge of priests conducting a Buddhist temple, beside which it stood; and in passing through the temple Scott paused for a moment, to watch another form of worship, which, in spite of the vast varieties he had seen, was something entirely new to him. Two priests stood by a table, before which a worshipper was kneeling. Over the table was a thin coating of soft, white sand. The man before the table laid down his offering, and the two priests, in response, placed their hands upon a little piece of wood, triangular in shape, with two little wheels upon two angles, and a pointed stick supporting the other. Then the little piece of wood began rolling about the table on its two wheels, and the pointed stick inscribed strange characters in the sand, which to the priests, at least, appeared to be Chinese words; a

communication from the spirits in response to the poor man's offering.

"Planchette!" gasped Scott, as he stood with open eyes before it; and indeed he was quite correct, though that little piece of wood, or one just like it, had been upon duty in that Buddhist temple for over a thousand years.

It is one of the most astonishing features of rummaging in China, to note the peculiar, the eccentric fashions of accomplishing results, fashions which have prevailed there for ages, but which have just crept into our Western world, and are famous as brilliant and modern philanthropies.

Through the city of Peking, each of the five districts is traversed by an ox-cart just before daylight. A signal is given of the approach of the cart, and all those who have children who have died during the night bring them out, and thus secure their burial. Those who have children, and no means to support them, bring them out, too, and they are taken to an orphan asylum. Near the heart of the city there is another curious institution, the result of only the most fertile brain for devising some new means of charity, called "the House of Hens' Feathers." For one-fifth of an English farthing the poor Chinamen of Peking can obtain a night's rest upon a feather-bed, the greatest luxury of the north. It is an enormous hall, covered completely with a deep layer of hens' feathers. When the hall is full at night, and each one has made a nest for himself among the feathers, an enormous felt blanket is let down by pulleys from the roof, to be drawn up again at daylight.

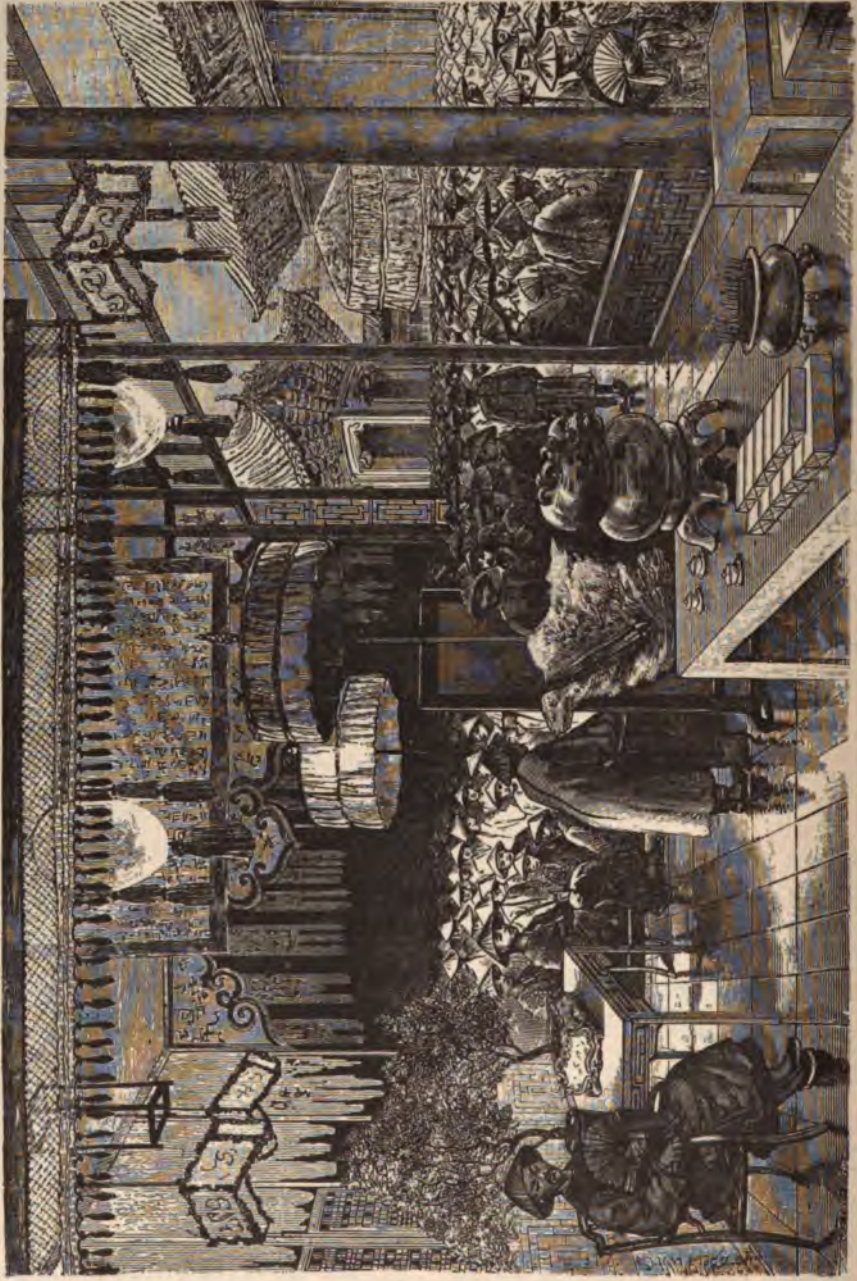
The holidays ended. The festival of lanterns was over. Paul was quite well enough to continue his journey and proceed to Hong-Kong, yet it was left for the governor to suggest the departure, and name the time when they should start.

Upon that night when they approached Kweilin had some one told Scott that nearly two months later they would still be there, and even be reluctant to leave the city, he must have found it impossible to believe it; but here, in the very man whom he most dreaded, and whom Paul at first sight had disliked with all his heart, Scott had found, for the first time, some one to share with him his constant thought for Paul's welfare, some one as careful as he himself could be that harm be kept away from him; and in the relief from this solitary struggle and anxiety, and in the midst of every luxury which China could afford, the hours and days had slipped away, and Kweilin become dearer. It was with a shudder that Scott thought of turning once more among strangers, even though the final goal were home itself.

CHAPTER XX.

ON! TO THE GREAT RIVER.

HONG-KONG was the name which to Scott represented an exit from China. Beyond this he knew no more of Hong-Kong than any other Chinese port. When the governor asked him why he would go to Hong-Kong, he could not tell; and when his secretary sat down with great maps and charts of the coast and provinces, he made it very clear at once that though it was much farther to go to Shang-hai, it was also much better to go there. There were mountains to cross in going to the west, to Hong-Kong, and barren country, where few lived, and they of the roughest and rudest in the empire; and once having brought them to Hong-Kong, there the governor's protection ceased, and they must seek for themselves a means to make the long sea-voyage which would yet remain between them and Shang-hai, where they would take a steamer for America. On the other hand, the broad roads and the great canals, and the branches of the great river, where wealthy cities were upon every hand, led northward to Nanchang, the next provincial capital, which is upon the shores of a great lake emptying into the great Blue River; and from Nanchang the enormous and palatial mandarin junks sailed down the lake, and down the river to the wharves of Shang-hai. The land travel would be but little longer, and much easier. The water part of the journey would be much safer, much more comfortable, and all under the direct protection of the



THE GOVERNOR'S FAREWELL.

governor of Kweilin, who could issue orders which other governors would be obliged to respect to the very end of the journey.

Thus from the communal palace, which they had entered almost as criminals, where they had suffered and where they had enjoyed as nowhere else, they started like mandarins of the highest rank, with all the honors the governor could bestow; and all that he asked in return was a parting blessing from the little friend of Dhondaram.

The guard of soldiers marched in front and behind. The spacious palanquins, with four bearers each, followed the advanced guard, for the governor's secretary was to accompany the party to the end of the journey. Then other palanquins followed, carrying the baggage; and last three servants, — one of them was Tao-sen.

As they left the gate of Kweilin, in spite of the friendship they left behind, and the undiscovered country into which they were entering, Scott could but draw a deep sigh of gratitude, and recall the old blind fortune-teller, as with a smile he looked at the gilded palanquins and listened to the tread of the soldiers, and said to himself that it was in no very helpless way, after all, that they were flying from the jaws of the dragon.

Ah, Scott! The old blind fortune-teller saw more in the darkness than you in the light. He did not tell you where and how the dragon would close his sharp teeth over you. He told you you would sit in his jaws and laugh. What are you doing now? Laughing. He told you you would not know the dragon when he was nearest. You knew the evil when Paul was ill. You did not laugh through those six days and nights, when you thought yourself sitting in his jaws. But you laughed up among the ruins of the old pagoda, and you are

laughing now. Look! Who are those two creatures in Chinese rags who joined the caravan a half-hour after it left Kweilin? They were not twenty feet behind your palanquin for a time. Now they have fallen farther back, but they are following still. No. He does not look. Palanquins are so constructed that one can look any way but backward. One rarely looks back. It is a safe position, there, for one who does not wish to be seen; and when the caravan came to a halt for dinner the two had disappeared. Even Tao-sen had not seen them; for, feeling his dignity as special servant of the little golden-haired prince of the caravan, he had taken an early opportunity to leave the others, and walk beside Paul's palanquin. Soon they were in the midst of rice-fields, on broad and beaten but rather dusty roads; and here and there about them lank buffaloes were plodding before a curious plough. Oxen and mules and horses are used in the north of China, but here in the south the buffalo does the work, when he is not too expensive a luxury. They were not many hours beyond the town, however, when the boys discovered that there was a more economical mode of breaking the ground. It was a pitiful sight at first, but they became quite accustomed to it before long. Paul was the first to discover it with his blue eyes forever wandering everywhere, and with an exclamation of indignation he pointed to a poor woman with her little crippled feet hobbling on before, harnessed into the plough, while her husband, with one hand holding a pipe, and the other resting on the plow, swaggered lazily behind.

Scott instantly made another note for his mother's benefit, and strengthened his opinion that her society had much better transfer their centre of operations from India to China.

American manufacturers have long been trying to introduce

their modern ploughs, to take the place of the old-time crook and sharpened spike. They have even made presents to high officials of beautiful hard-wood and nickel-plated ploughs, and offered to cover them with eyes and dragons' heads; but in the majority of cases, at least, they have been unsuccessful, for the noble and insurmountable reason that the ploughs cut too deep, and there is very great danger that some morning, in the midst of his ploughing, the Chinese farmer would gouge a hole into the side of the dragon, which every one knows lies beneath every rice-field and tea-field and every other field in the Middle Kingdom.

They passed two farms conducted on a yet more modest scale, where the rude spade did all the work; and even Scott could not refrain from admiring the mathematical precision and absolute neatness of their fields, from which every weed is removed with the most untiring patience. That ground must be very bad indeed where the Chinese farmer cannot produce something.

On the hillsides too high and dry for rice, there were sweet potatoes and hemp and cotton, or mulberry or tallow trees, and they even cultivated pines for turpentine. But the greatest marvel of Chinese agriculture is in its irrigation. There are endless contrivances by which they carry water for miles, and scatter it all over their fields, till rice-swamps even can be found in high plains, and on a single hillside are fields where flourish productions of such different kinds as require from the dampest to the driest soil, always furnished with their appropriate needs by these curious contrivances for carrying water where they want it, and draining it away where they do not want it. Owing to this effective work, the Chinese farmer in any ordinarily favorable locality gathers three harvests in a season from his

fields. He does not even wait to reap the first; but so soon as it is well advanced he plants the second between the rows, that it may start at its leisure, and while the yellow grain rustles in the breeze, the little green shoots tremble about its roots.

All kinds of grain raised in Europe or America are found in China. It is a very great mistake, made by many strangers, to suppose that rice is the daily food and staff of life of all China. It is more of a luxury in the north provinces than it is in America. Wheat and corn, oats and barley, in their natural state, or crushed in the way that has become as popular in this country, are the food of a much larger portion; and in the province of Kau-son bread is made, and so far back as history reaches, always has been made, exactly as we make it to-day, soft, white, and spongy. And in this, if we would, we might add another to the long list of convenient things which we have borrowed from the heathen Chinese.

Then the little caravan passed bamboo forests bending before the light breeze; not so extensive there as in other parts of China, but beautiful anywhere, and as a well-demonstrated fact more valuable to the empire than even her apparently inexhaustible mines. The bamboo is a native of China, and within the limits of the empire there exist sixty-three different varieties.

Here and there ponds and little lakes appeared, sometimes covered with water-lilies, and Tzo-sen gathered large bunches to decorate Paul's palanquin.

Several times, during their palanquin journey, men with peaked rattan caps, and cotton girdles, and sandals fastened with leather thongs, passed them, bearing small boxes in their belts. They always pass in silence, walking with long, regular strides, swinging their arms, with no appearance of haste, with their eyes always fixed upon the ground. To watch them one

would have thought it an easy task to keep pace with them; yet even when the bearers were running, as they often did, at a slow dog-trot, the silent men would slowly but surely approach and slowly gain upon them, till they took the lead and finally disappeared in the distance.

They were trained government couriers, on the imperial highway, carrying despatches in the little boxes at their belts. They always walk, because by many experiments it was long ago demonstrated that they could go faster and farther than horses. The regular post is carried by horsemen, for whom frequent relays of horses are provided all along the post-ways; but even then if the greatest haste is required, in matters of importance, the carriers on foot are invariably employed. They are trained for this from childhood. They make long marches, with sacks of sand tied about their hips, till at last, when relieved of this burden, they are able to walk for three and sometimes four days, without a moment's rest, eating as they go, and sleeping even, without once interrupting that regular and rapid pace. It seems strange to find this feature, also, so remarkably developed in a land where such a word as haste means an unknown quantity, to be used simply in promises.

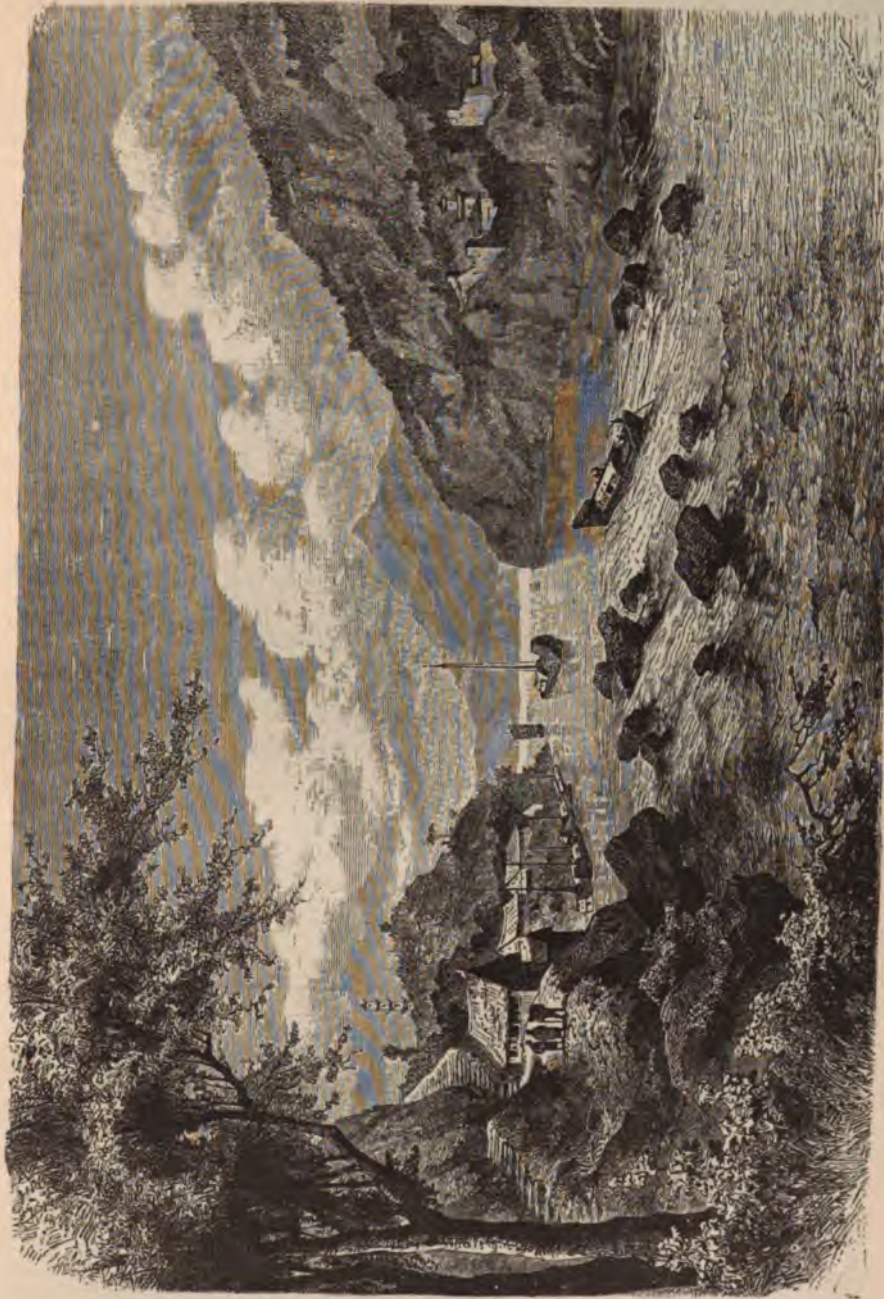
But to follow the boys through the twelve days' journey in their palanquins would be only to repeat what we have already been over, with a few novelties here and there, and a little more gilding and bowing and scraping; for some of those sandalled couriers had gone from the governor of Kweilin to the prefects and mandarins all along the way, through his vast province, with orders which none of them dared to disregard, especially when they saw the escort accompanying the two strangers from over the sea; and other couriers had gone as far as the palace of the governor of Nanchang, who was only too ready

to act a friendly part for his brother in power, who every one knew would very soon be occupying a still higher position in the imperial court at Peking. So that all along the way the wanderers were greeted with the utmost civility, and every politeness was offered them.

A large official guard and a very large unofficial concourse awaited them at the great gate of Nanchang. There was music, or what was intended for it, and fireworks even before it was dark; and but for the soldiers it would have been impossible to have forced their way to the communal palace, which had been prepared for them in all its glory. But their position was so different now that as the weird faces peered at them, Scott wondered how it had been possible for him to be so frightened on the old wharf at Wucheun. It was very different now, however, and Scott might have recalled the old Chinese proverb, that one is bold when he stands behind a wall.

There was no necessity for delaying their journey more than a day at Nanchang; and notwithstanding the gorgeousness of their reception, it was very evident that the governor had no desire to keep the expensive visitors any longer than was necessary. The mandarin junk was even ready before they reached the city; and a most magnificent junk it proved to be, fitted up as the finest communal palace in China. The soldiers of the governor of Kweilin were discharged, and the palanquin-bearers turned back. Only the white-haired secretary remained, and the inevitable Tao-sen. But a new guard and new servants were furnished, and in the same pomp with which the coming guest was welcomed the parting guest was sped.

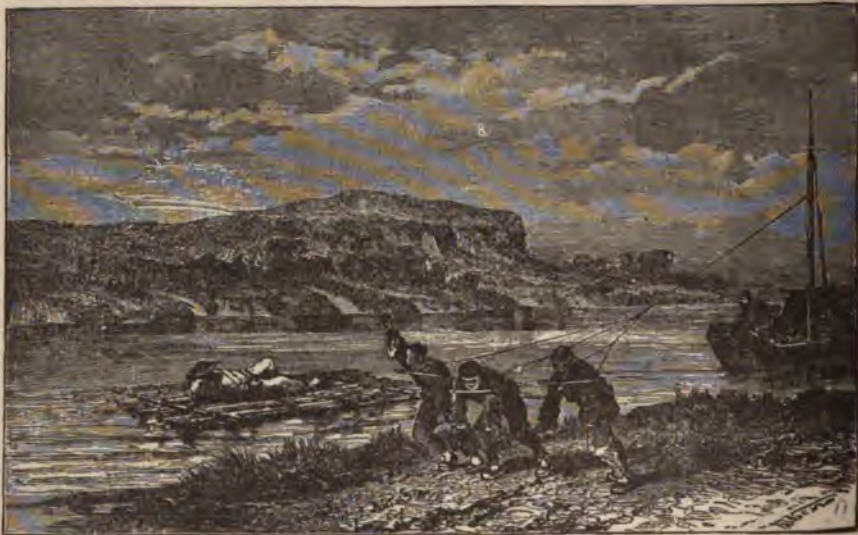
Great junks were everywhere over the broad blue surface about them. Ere long the land was out of sight, or lying in a misty haze along the horizon; and it seemed impossible that



DOWN THE RAPIDS.

they were in the heart of crowded China, upon a little lake so small that it is hardly located in our maps, instead of on the open sea. But so it was, and in time they entered the great Blue River, rolling its turbulent floods from the mountains of Tartary through the great empire and out into the Yellow Sea.

Down the great river they sailed, only anchoring before vast cities when the demands of the larder must be heard, or when



SLOWER PROGRESS.

Paul, who had instinctively been throned as the prince imperial, announced his desire to go on shore.

The days slipped by and glided into weeks, and the sun shone as though determined that no shadow should mar the happiness of the last days of our boys in China. But the sun was not all-powerful, after all. The clouds did come occasionally, and the Blue River, now more than two miles wide at times, rose in waves like a small ocean. It did no harm, however, and the boys laughed as they sat in the jaws of the



A WRECK.

dragon. For when the sun shone it had to shine on the evil as well as on the good, and the same breeze which hurried the mandarin junk along, or held it back, filled other sails as well. Some of these sails were larger even than those of the mandarin junk, and the craft beneath them, though of humbler mould, moved more rapidly.

Then the towers of Nankin, the old capital of China, appeared, one of the strongholds of the Tai-ping rebellion. Here the junk stopped for two days, partly that the boys might see the old city, partly that the secretary might visit his family, living still in the old capital, and partly that the junk might replenish itself in every quarter; for Shanghai was near at hand, and who should bear a priceless treasure from the Middle Kingdom to the Western devils at Shanghai, and not exert himself to the utmost to do it with grandeur and imposing dignity? The captain declared that his junk should be one mass of streamers, banners, and bright colors; that she should glow from stem to stern, and that to perfect everything she must lie at anchor for two days before Nankin as the most favorable point.

They had now passed all the dangers upon the Blue River but those from storms. They had passed the great rapids, down which, at times, the junks are hurled in relentless fury, but not at this season of the year, and where, at times, junks moving up the river must be pulled along with ropes by the poor sailors, who grunt and groan and sing "Hi-ho! Ho-lo! Hi-ho-lo! Ho-ho-lo!" as though their very lives were going out of them with every grunt.

Lying wedged among the rocks they passed a battered wreck; and the captain graphically described the terrific storm of wind and water during which it had occurred, and told them how manfully he had fought this same gale at precisely the

same spot. He told them how the great yellow waves of the Blue River dashed over his junk from stem to stern, sweeping the deck, but how he himself had held the helm to the



THE CAPTAIN'S STORY.

tempest, and with only one sailor to help him, — for all the rest were frightened beyond all command, — he had faced the fury and faced it down, while his brother captain left his junk among the rocks, and his body in the Blue River.

The story he told most graphically, so that the boys felt and saw everything, as the secretary as earnestly translated it. But such is the peculiar combination of Chinese character, that so soon as the captain turned his back the secretary smiled sarcastically, and calmly remarked that it was doubtless a lie, every word of it. Now they were beyond these dangers, however, and safely anchored before Nankin.



WATER CARRIERS.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE DRAGON CLOSES HIS JAWS TOO LATE.

THE mandarin junk came to anchor not far from a weather-beaten craft which had passed it upon the river. But that was not at all remarkable, and in order to make the most of their time and see all, not only in the great



A BRIDGE OF BOATS.

capital of the south, but as much as possible of the famous ruins in the plain beyond, the boys made ready to go on shore at once.

To the right a branch entered the Blue River, broad and anything but blue, but so shallow that it was of no service to

navigation except as it furnished water for a canal beside it; and a little way up the river they could see a half-dilapidated bridge of boats, which in the days when Nankin was in its glory was a triumph of which China may well have been proud. And before them lay the city where once rose the famous Porcelain Tower, a great pagoda built in 1411, costing nearly \$4,000,000, only a grim ruin now, but wonderful when one can realize what it was.

On reaching the old wharf, they did not stand, as at first, in wonder, satisfied to watch the peculiar people and their odd manners. So much of China had lost its charms for them. They were themselves as thoroughly Chinese as any of those by whom they were surrounded but for their white faces, which had become very brown in the last three weeks, and their long hair. So very true was this, that, aided by the fact that they were now in a land where real and complete Europeans and Americans were often seen in all their own eccentricities, the people did not even stop to look at them. The boatmen and loungers on the wharf hardly wasted a moment in watching them, and no one else annoyed them but the owners of conveyances. And such conveyances! They must select something from the varied collection; for they no longer had the governor's palanquins at their disposal, and no one to turn to for the "freedom of the city."

Tao-sen made inquiries as to where they should find a headquarters for vehicles of some sort, and was directed up a comparatively broad way to a carriage-stand. A carriage-stand! Precisely so; for though the most of a carriage which can be found in the common and inland ways of China is precisely what it was three thousand years ago, and possibly always will be, though it is only a rude palanquin, with a wheel or two, but

no springs at one end and a horse or a mule or an ox at the other, still they have carriage-stands, and always have had them, where, such as they are, the conveyances can be hired by the hour or the day or the trip, just as in London or Boston.

On the way they passed a Chinese woman making rope, beside a ruin of what in some distant dynasty must have been



THE ROPE-MAKER.

a lordly palace. She had a bright face, and smiled a welcome as the strangers approached.

“Don’t believe she’d mind, if we stopped to watch her a minute,” said Paul, as he smiled in return, and cautiously edged a little nearer. But the rope-maker smiled again, that wonderful word of all languages, which no one can mistake, and thus reassured, Paul went boldly to the front and began examining her work. She was making that famous hemp-rope, the value of which the sailor knows, which is made so well in

China that American manufacturers imitate it as nearly as possible, and then put Chinese names upon the coils to make them sell well.

Paul entered into this new research with a child's curiosity, and even before Scott had become tired of waiting he had won his way into the good graces of the rope-maker, till she had

even allowed him to try his hand at the twisting and turning and walking.

While Paul was thus engaged, a curious contrivance came up the street.

"A wheelbarrow!" Paul exclaimed.

"A sail-boat!"



A WHEELBARROW SAIL-BOAT!

said Scott. And indeed it was both combined. A coolie was plodding along behind it, pushing a load of merchandise from the wharf. He was not pushing so hard as the same wheelbarrow-load would have required him to push in America, however; for upon a very wise and very Chinese principle that the wind can propel just as well on land as it does on the sea, if one only give it an opportunity, he had rigged a sail to a bamboo mast, and was letting the wind do his work for him. This old custom of China is not confined, however,



THE CITY GATE

to the transportation of merchandise. In some of the great cities the wheelbarrow is a very common mode of conveyance. It has one wheel nearly in the centre, and on either side a



SAILING ON LAND.

somewhat uncomfortable seat. Two people must ride, to perfectly balance the wheelbarrow; but in case he has but one customer, the poor coolie who acts as horse and driver all in one has a way of twisting the strap over his shoulders, by which he



ANOTHER METHOD OF TRAVELING.

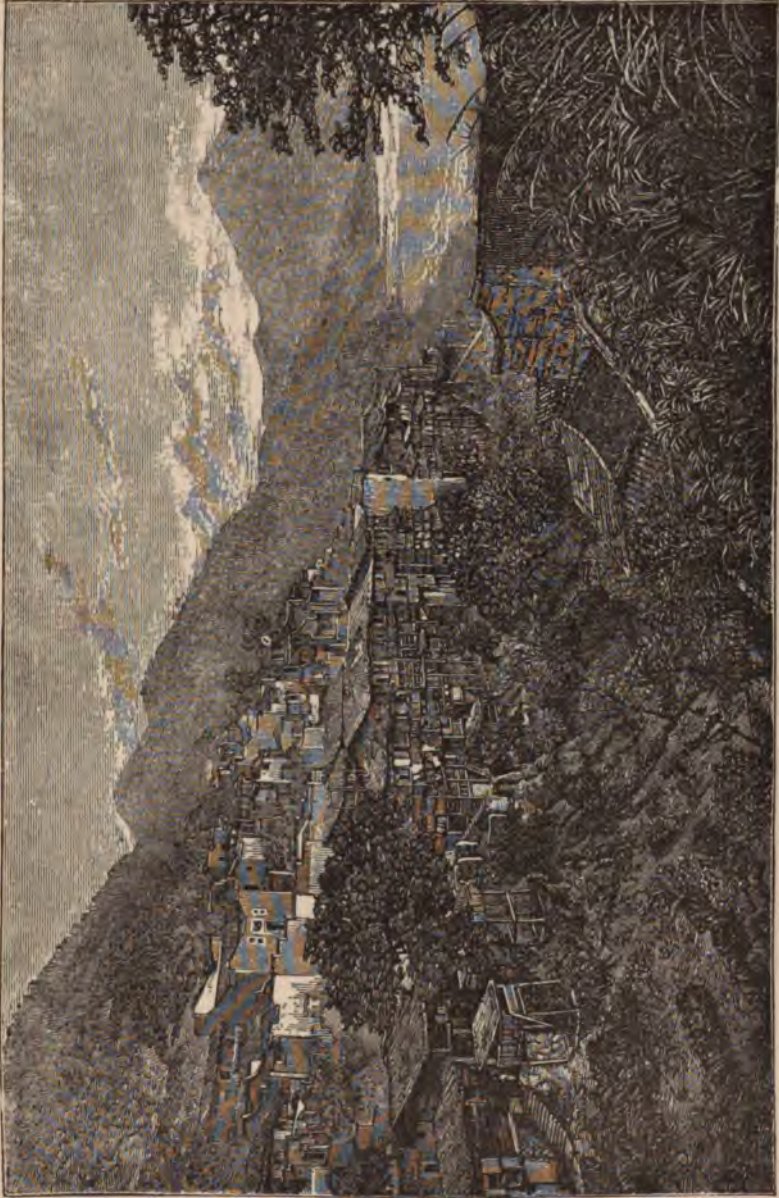
lifts the arms of the wheelbarrow in such a manner as to counteract the uneven weight, and make his burden sit at an angle of about forty-five degrees. When he has a tramp to take into the country, and the wind is with him, he, too, hoists a sail. A Chinese merchant travelling in this way passed the boys when, some hours later, themselves balanced, one on each side of a clumsy wheel and being trundled on, they found themselves beyond the city, on their way to the famous ruins.

Then they climbed the hill rising above the city, and the view stretched far up and down the river. It was a beautiful picture; that enormous sheet of water, almost like a vast sea, stretching away into the distant horizon, whither they were soon to follow it (sooner than they thought, indeed), just as it came out of the distant horizon, behind, whence they had already followed it.



THE RIVER VIEW.

Starting once more, they passed a travelling blacksmith, encamped with his family on the hillside, soliciting work from



INTO THE MOUNTAINS.

every one who passed. He had been a soldier years ago, and belonged to a part of the army which was sent from the coast far away into the interior, and by some mistake or other was left there to disband when it saw fit and make its way home again if it could. The blacksmith, at least, was trying to do so. He said he had been plodding eastward for four years, working his passage by carrying an entire blacksmith's shop on his shoulders, and stopping here and there for a month or six months to replenish his fortune.

While they were advancing down the green hills, a cloud which had been growing in the west came sweeping, now, in



TRAVELING BLACKSMITHS.

great black masses over the plain stretching before them. The man who was wheeling their barrow made rapidly for a little hut, half hidden and half ruined, but offering sufficient shelter for the time. It was a magnificent position from which to watch the storm, as it surged, this way and that, in its fierceness over the plain, and some of the murky clouds seemed almost rolling along the surface of the earth, and sometimes the lightning flashes shot *upward* instead of toward the earth; a curious phenomenon, which many a great scientist has declared

impossible, yet which nature is proving very possible every now and then, in such storms as the one which the boys were watching in the valley of Nankin. The force of both wind and rain was spent before the passing shower reached their position on the hill, but it went rushing up the river in such fury as the boys thought must have wrecked the junk which they had passed, and made them particularly grateful that they stood upon the firm rocks of the Nankin hills.

The Chinese as a nation are scrupulously particular not to wet themselves intentionally, or get themselves wet if it be possible to avoid it; so that as soon as the storm gave its warning, and before a drop of rain had fallen, the villagers occupying the huts huddled upon that hillside had all protected themselves under their adjustable umbrellas, and a most remarkable sight it was to see them, in hats, cloaks, and skirts of rice straw or bamboo, thatched just like the houses, to shed the rain, on precisely the same principles.



IN THE RAIN.

Then as the sun appeared they started down the hill once more, having already lost much time. Over the plain the coolie trundled them, and as they emerged from a line of mulberry-trees, dripping from the late rain, bordering the road, giving them a more extended view, Paul pointed eagerly forward.

“Elephants!” he cried.

"Camels!" added Scott, pointing a little to the left. There were two long lines of camels and elephants and other strange figures, at the distant limit of which stood the ruins of what was once a magnificent mausoleum, the tombs of the Mings, the monarchs of the old dynasty which raised Nankin to its highest pomp.

"What makes them keep so still?" asked Paul.



THE SILENT CARAVAN.

"Give it up," replied Scott. "Guess they're drying off after the shower. Must be some big boss Cheenaman, as Ling says, is on a pilgrimage here to worship his ancestors."

Tao-sen laughed. He had never been here before, but he had heard of the tombs of the Mings, as what Chinaman has not?

"No more big boss Cheenaman talkee fadder here," said he. "Plenty elephant, plenty camel, plenty evlyting, allee samee,

jus now waitee huddled, huddled year. No more come, no more go."

"What!" Scott exclaimed, as they drew nearer and he looked more closely. "They are made of stone."

They were made of stone, and, as Tao-sen had said, the long lines of camels and elephants had been waiting there for hundreds and hundreds of years. No more came, and none of them ever went away. They looked very real, even when the barrow was being wheeled down the avenue, passing them, one after another.

They wandered through the must and mould and moss of the old mausoleum, and the sky was growing red with even-



A STONE ELEPHANT.

ing, when Scott, startled to note how late it was, hurried their return. But never did barrow-wheeler move more slowly. The wind was against him, he said, though surely it blew, and rather too fiercely for comfort, upon their backs. But the man would not put up the sail.

There were other ruins along the path which they had passed in going, promising to visit them on their return, but now it was so late that Scott directed the man to wheel them at once to the city and the wharf. In spite of this command,

however, the man slowly and deliberately turned one side toward one of these ruins.

"Go on! Go on to the city!" cried Scott, looking fiercely back, and Tao-sen as fiercely repeated the command, and the glow over the western sky was already growing softer and



THE MEMORIAL ARCH.

slowly turning into the silver gray of twilight. Scott became alarmed, and wondered how it had been possible for him to venture so far alone with Paul, and how he had been so blind as not to realize that the night was coming on, there in the plain, wild and weird. And who could tell what might not be there beside those old ruins; what dangers from the night air, what

malarial poisons for Paul to breathe, what robbers or murderers even? He shuddered, and, as the man took no notice of his command, he turned and shouted,—

“ Stop him, Ling ! stop the fellow.”

Ling was not made of bravery. He would much rather have let things take their course and content himself with howling and letting his teeth chatter when worse came to worst, and they were literally forced to inspect the ghostly ruin in the ghostly shades of evening. But, obedient to the command, he approached the safest quarter of the stubborn coolie, which of course was behind him, and caught his pigtail.

The sturdy coolie turned suddenly, and letting the barrow-handles hang by the straps over his shoulders, he struck Tao-sen a fierce and sudden blow right in the face. Tao-sen with a shriek fell back into the grass. Scott turned to spring from the wheelbarrow, but this was no easy task. One's position on those seats is such that he is much more likely to fall from it and land on his face than he is to gain his feet, unless under the best of circumstances he moves slowly; and to make the matter more difficult, the coolie suddenly started on, now rapidly enough, running toward the ruin. It was all so sudden, so astounding, that Scott, bewildered and stunned, clasped Paul's shoulder over the arm of the barrow between them, and struggled with himself to solve the question, and upon the instant to determine the wisest thing to do.

He had not much time to ponder, and no time to arrive at a conclusion, when suddenly the coolie stopped and upset the wheelbarrow. Scott struggled to his feet and grasped for Paul, when in the twilight and the shadows of the grove about the ruin and out of the very ground there rose armed men; fierce Chinese, in coarse garments, with spears and clubs and

long knives. Scott's hands were bound behind him, and a vile cloth thrown over his head and tied about his neck, before his bewildered senses had more than grasped this strange transformation.



A SUDDEN CHANGE.

“ Paul!” he cried. But the voice was instantly stifled by a strong hand, and no answer was returned.

The coolie who had brought the barrow there was then as

fiercely seized and dragged and kicked and pushed, howling, forward and out of sight. This was the thanks he received. Paul alone was uninjured. No one bound his hands. No one covered his head. He may have been frightened; as what child would not have been? But Paul was peculiar in his natural composition, and his life had been such as to strengthen those peculiarities. His little nature was something like rubber. It would bend almost too easily, but break never, not while duty called upon it. Paul stood upon the ground in the midst of these scenes, as silent and calm as Dhondaram could have been. He saw the cheated coolie hurried forward, through the grim soldiers, if soldiers they were, and out of sight among the ruins. He saw two men take hold of Scott, a little less roughly, perhaps, and lead him on, and, asking no one's permission, he followed.

Within, Scott was searched from head to foot. The belt of silver was found, which the prefect of Wucheun had given him, and was rudely torn away. But they were evidently disappointed. A stern man with a savage face stood in the shadow watching every motion. He was clad in Chinese clothes of a mongrel order, torn and ragged, and another, in much the same costume, stood beside him. Paul saw them, but this time he did not cry out in fear, or cling trembling to any helping hand for safety. He recognized the face, and in an instant he knew it all. But there was no arm to help him, no hand to shelter him, and his own little heart rose in defiance and took the place of all who might have befriended him. He realized what they were looking for. His little hand instinctively, but not with any sudden motion, sought his own girdle. It was there. It had been there since the wreck of the "Tigress," safe in its oiled case. He did not realize how frail he was and how easily those rough men might have obtained possession of that precious package if they

only knew where to look for it. But they did not know and they did not look. Paul recognized the ugly face, too, half hidden in the shadows ; not now with the fright with which he saw it in his state-room door on board the "Tigress," or looking through the open window at night in the communal palace. Then it had all the mystery of a dream, and the little mind was not skilled in separating the real and the ideal.

Paul looked at him steadily and calmly now, and his little nerves were true as steel. The ruined walls faded before him, he seemed to be standing again by a half-mud hut on the banks of the Ganges. He suddenly saw it all again as he had seen it in his delirium in the communal palace. He knew now and for the first time why it was that the repeated vision of that face had caused him such inexplicable horror. He saw himself, the little half-conscious creature, slowly coming out of that long opium stupor, scarcely recognizing, scarcely knowing that which transpired about him, only carrying away with him from that horrible uncertainty the image of one face. No wonder that its reappearance had been terrible in its effect upon the little blue eyes opening out of sleep. But now he was wide awake, now he understood it all, now he stood, calmly conscious, calmly waiting. The figure, seeing the boy's eyes fixed on him, came forward, and with an ugly oath, said, in English, "Ye ain't fergot me, kid?" but *now*, without a perceptible tremor, even in his clear voice, Paul replied in Hindustani, that language in which the wretch before him had spoken when he remembered him, —

"I am not yours. You gave me to Dhondaram! and I belong to him. If you know him as well as I, you will be careful how you trouble what belongs to him. *No! I am not afraid of you!*"

“Huffy. Humph!” replied the grim villain, and turned back into the shadows again. But no one laid a hand on Paul.

A moment later the boys were directed to enter a covered palanquin, which was closed, and they felt themselves being carried somewhere. The moment they were thus alone, Paul unbound Scott’s hands and unbound the cloth from his face. He could not see the cheeks he uncovered, but they were very pale.

“O Paul, Paul!” sobbed Scott, “what can one poor fellow like me do for you? They bound me before I could lift my hand.”

“They did it pretty carefully,” replied Paul, gravely. “They tried not to hurt you, I could see they did, or I’d ’a’ made a fuss.”

“You! my dear, dear Paul,” said Scott, laying his trembling hand upon Paul’s in the darkness. “It was for you I should have made a fuss.”

“That man would n’t dare to hurt me,” replied Paul, scornfully.

“What man?” asked Scott, for he had seen nothing.

“That man from India,” Paul replied, and, indeed, even now it was all which he knew how to put into words.

“Well, I wish I knew what he was going to do with us now,” moaned Scott.

“I don’t care,” said Paul, consolingly. “He knows Dhondaram, and he did n’t even dare to speak cross to me. He wanted our precious package, that’s all, and he thought you had it, and if you had kept it it would be gone now.”

“He got my belt,” said Scott.

“He did n’t get mine,” replied Paul, triumphantly.

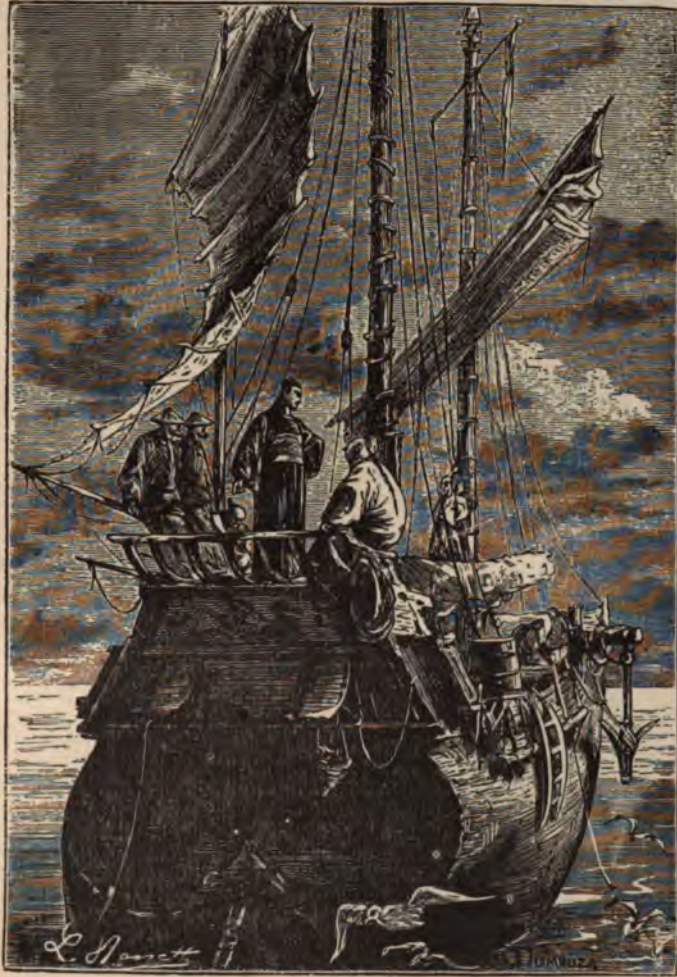
An hour passed by, and the palanquin was upon a boat. The

boys could feel the motion of the oars. Then it was lifted upon the deck of a larger junk. They were sure of this, though there were no voices to indicate that it was the mandarin junk by which they came.

Scott's heart sank lower and lower. He tried the door of the palanquin, but it was fast. It was not like an ordinary palanquin, for now that he examined it more closely he found it only a rude, rough box. A cage! The thought flashed across him suddenly. A cage! He pushed against the side wall. It was solid and firm; not like a yielding palanquin. A cage! He heard the tackling grating, here and there. They were dragging up an anchor. A cage! It was resting on the deck of a junk and the junk was moving! moving on the great Blue River! moving toward the sea! Scott groaned and sank down, in the darkness, his head falling heavily against the side of the cage. In his agony he was almost unconscious for a time. He realized nothing of what was going on about him. It was not that he was weak, foolish, and a coward; far from it. He would have given his right hand that moment and have had his own imprisonment increased in its terrible prospects to any extent to have placed Paul safe on the mandarin junk again. *That* was the keen edge of his torture.

Paul took a more practical view of the matter. He was not afraid that night when they entered Wucheun, when for him Scott's heart was throbbing, for he felt sure that God knew what he was doing with them. He was not afraid to-night to leave Nankin even in this fashion, for he felt the strong arm of Dhondaram protecting him, and several hours afterward, when Scott was called to realization of things about him again, he found Paul's golden head nestled upon his knee and the little fellow fast asleep.

The men upon the mandarin junk saw the very commonplace junk which had anchored below them slowly hoist a single sail and move out into the river. It was a beautiful



THE PIRATE SAILED AWAY.

moonlight night. Every figure on the deck was clearly defined. There sat the captain, a huge fellow, almost as broad as he was long, and a tall, lank man beside him. Opposite stood two curious fellows, who, even in the moonlight, could not be mis-

taken for Chinamen, notwithstanding their Chinese clothes. They had seen two boat-loads of sailors, too, move from the wharf to the junk, and some of the sailors carried spears.

"Pirates!" said one of the mandarin junk sailors to another; and the other, with a shiver, replied, "Yes, pirates." For pirates are almost as common on the Blue River as they are on the Yellow Sea. They were quite correct, and with a feeling of relief they saw the junk move away. It was nothing very astonishing, either, when, as the junk moved into the river, they noticed some one drag himself out of the water, under the stern, and clamber slowly up the ropes, till he lay just under the rail. Some runaway or other, some rogue who, to escape the clutches of Chinese justice, was ready even to give himself into the service of a savage captain of a Chinese privateer.

Of course Scott and Paul did not return to the mandarin junk at sundown, as expected, and possibly the captain was anxious, yet the secretary was away, too, and so was Tao-sen. It was quite possible that the boys were to spend the night in the house of the secretary's family. Then it occurred to the captain that the secretary had said that he should not stay there himself, and still more uneasy, as the time went on, and the clear moon rose, he took the junk boat, and with two sailors went on shore and walked up on the wharf. While he was thus walking Tao-sen came running up to him. He caught the captain's coat, and pointing to the pirate junk, which had not yet begun to move, whispered in his ear a story that would have startled a man even braver and stronger than the brave, strong captain, had he, too, lived in China, and known that, as a consequence, he and all his fortune and all his family and relatives, even, would be held responsible if he failed to do his

duty in carrying the boys from America safely to Shanghai. He turned to ask more, but Tao-sen was gone. Poor, frightened Chinaman, "Run-for-life" was a good name for him. He had lost his senses even. That was plain. But the captain was no less alarmed. What could he do? The secretary was still somewhere in Nankin, he did not know where; and very possibly this was at the best only a joke, a grim sort of a joke, played upon him by the impertinent little rascal, Tao-sen. The captain had not liked him from the first. He thought Ling put on airs and vaunted himself as the favored servant of little Paul. What could he do? While he stood pondering, the pirate junk moved farther and farther away. She caught the force of the current and swept onward more rapidly.

At last the secretary came. He knew nothing of Scott and Paul, and only made the poor captain's misery so much the worse by the frantic manner in which he raved and shouted, and demanded that the junk start at once in pursuit.

"It is no use," replied the captain. "That junk passed us upon the river. It can sail faster than we. It is an hour ahead of us now."

"No matter! No matter! Start! start!" cried the secretary, fiercely, and the captain could do nothing but obey.

The sailors were roused. Fortunately most of them were on board the junk, and fortunately, too, the soldiers from the governor's guard of honor, the veterans of the province, were on board. But what would it all avail with no power to overtake the pirates? Still the captain started, and an hour later was under full sail pushing down the Blue River.

And the pirate? Ah, the wind filled her sails, too, and larger sails, and though rough looking, which was only a disguise, she was built in the stanchest manner for speed and

endurance, and could go three miles to every two of her pursuer. Still Paul slept as soundly as if in his bed, and Scott again was keeping a painful vigil, not daring to move lest he should waken his brother, when a sail dropped, and by the sound without it was evident that there was some commotion. Then close beside his prison he heard two voices, conversing in English.

“That’s a silk junk we’re overhaulin’,” said one voice; and the other, with an oath, replied, —

“Yes, and they’re going to bring her down and capture her. It would be fun enough but for this box. But I don’t like the delay. We must keep these boys till we secure those papers.”

“These pirates’ll do as they’re a mind to. We’re lucky enough to get their help at all,” said the first.

Pirates! Scott understood it all now, and that they were overtaking a junk with a cargo of silk, which they proposed to attack. For a moment excitement gained upon his fears. There was a narrow streak of moonlight stealing into his prison now, where the door did not close perfectly. He could almost see through it. It was only the work of a moment, and an agreeable diversion, to cut with his knife till he had made a slit so broad that he could easily see the wide stretch of water, glistening in subtle ripples in the moonlight. He heard two boats lowered and thought of the savage men who filled them, as he had seen them a few hours before at the old ruin.

All was still for a few minutes. Then a fierce, wild yell arose from near at hand. The sailors on the silk junk had discovered their pursuers. The junk was boarded. The shouts increased. Now and then there was a report as of some uncertain fire-arms. Then for a moment the junk lay in the river within range of Scott’s limited vision, and his blood ran cold in

his veins as he watched the struggle, in the magnifying moonlight, and saw body after body go by the board, as one after another of the ill-armed crew fell before the fierce pirates or leaped into the water, courting some other death, and the junk



THEY CAPTURED THE SILK JUNK.

had hardly passed beyond his sight again ere the noise subsided and the victory was won.

The manner in which Chinese soldiers have met the armies of Great Britain, fired their guns once and thrown them on the ground and run away, has often been used and accepted as an argument that they were the most cowardly set on earth, whereas, in reality, it only shows their good sense. What could the

miserable weapons of China accomplish against the modern fire-arms of England? They are fierce enough and brave enough when fighting among themselves, and possibly if a brigade of British soldiers should some day be called upon to face a well-armed phalanx, with nothing but bows and arrows, bamboo spears, and rusty matchlocks, they, too, might be convinced that a good part of valor lay in their legs.

The attack upon the silk junk was not a great delay, but the noise had wakened Paul, and he and Scott sat in their prison waiting the next motion. Once more the work of hoisting the heavy bamboo sails began, as the silk junk, with a few of the pirate sailors, continued its course as though nothing had happened. But the more the sailors pulled upon the ropes the more difficulty they found. The great sail would not move an inch. They tried the smaller sail, and the rope broke in the rigging. The captain raved. The two men who spoke English swore. The sailors went aloft, adjusted the ropes, which were strangely tangled and twisted, considering that the sail had been lowered only a half-hour before, and at last, more than an hour later, they again began to pull. This time the great sail went up. It filled in the strong breeze blowing down the river, but the moment it filled the heavy ropes at the lower corners snapped, and the great sail floated like a flag from the mast till one of the upper ropes broke and the whole hung dangling.

Fury would hardly tell the story of the captain, huge as he was, and madness would fall far short of describing the two strangers.

They worked all night, while Scott and Paul sat and listened, and the junk only floated in the current. Early in the morning the small sail was ready and filled again. This time it held its place, and the junk began to move more rapidly. But now, not

far behind them, they discovered the mandarin junk, and the two men who spoke English became demons. This made the pirate captain calmer, more dignified, and more savage. Through the



THEY LOOKED THROUGH THE CRACK.

hole which Scott had made he could look down the deck, and nervously watched the little group. On one side of an old, rusty cannon sat the fat captain. On the other side stood two

men; while grasping the helm was a Chinaman, naked to the waist, his queue bound over his head, a loose and ragged pair of breeches bound at the waist by a leather belt.

The man who stood nearest him! Scott shuddered. He had seen that face in Benares, when waiting in the Dak-Bungalow with Richard Raymond. It was — yes, it was the half-caste engineer, the friend of Roderick Dennett. Scott understood now what Paul meant when he said that they were searching for the precious papers the night before. Then his eyes rested for a moment on the next man and then on the native at the helm.

“Paul!” he whispered, “look through that hole; see. Who are those men? Do you know them?”

“That man from India,” said Paul, with a shudder.

“And the other?” added Scott, eagerly.

“There, now,” Paul replied, “I told you that ugly quartermaster on the ‘Tigress’ was n’t good, and you said he was, just because he cried about his home. I guess he ought to cry, and I thought Tao-sen killed him or he got drowned that night, and I wish he did, and there he is. Scott! Scott! Scott!”

“Hush! hush! Paul. They will hear you. What is it. Tell me softly.”

“Ling!” said Paul, and in spite of himself he laughed aloud. “Is n’t he funny. I did n’t know him. He’s steering the ship. Wonder if he knows we’re here.”

Scott hardly heard what Paul was saying. His heart gave a great bound. Tao-sen stood at the helm of the pirate junk. There was no doubt of it. Paul was not mistaken, though the face was twisted almost beyond recognition. What a wonderful reassurance that timid, trembling China boy

imparted! Scott suddenly felt that all was right again, for Ling stood at the helm. Down came the mandarin junk and on sped the work upon the great sail. At last it was ready to hoist, and the mandarin junk was within speaking distance. The captain, in the name of the governor of the province, ordered the pirate to heave to.

"Pull up the sail for your life," muttered the pirate, and the sailors obeyed, while he turned and replied in derision to the mandarin junk that he was in haste and could not stop; for the sail filled, the junk groaned under the sudden pressure and darted forward.

Scott's face was pressed hard against the side of their prison, as he looked eagerly through the hole. Was all to be lost? He saw the two men laughing. He saw the captain throw himself down again beside the cannon. He saw Tao-sen grasp the helm with might and main, grind his teeth, brace his bare feet on the deck, and tugging for his life carry the helm to the rail, on to it, over it, and lie braced upon the stern of the junk, which yielded, shivered, swung about, and made a complete half-circle, entirely losing both wind and current, before the astounded captain roused himself to a single action. Then it was too late. He sprang for the helm. Tao-sen dropped it, and only a miserable, frightened Chinaman again, with that yell, "Hi! yi! Ya! ha!" he sprang into the water. But the work was done. The mandarin junk was beside them. The governor's soldiers were brave enough when they had Chinamen to deal with and the glory of catching a pirate as reward.

But who, of his own will, should tell or listen to too harsh a story? It was a dark cloud that for a moment hung over the last days of our boys in China. Fortunately the sides of their prison prevented them from seeing. They only heard, and

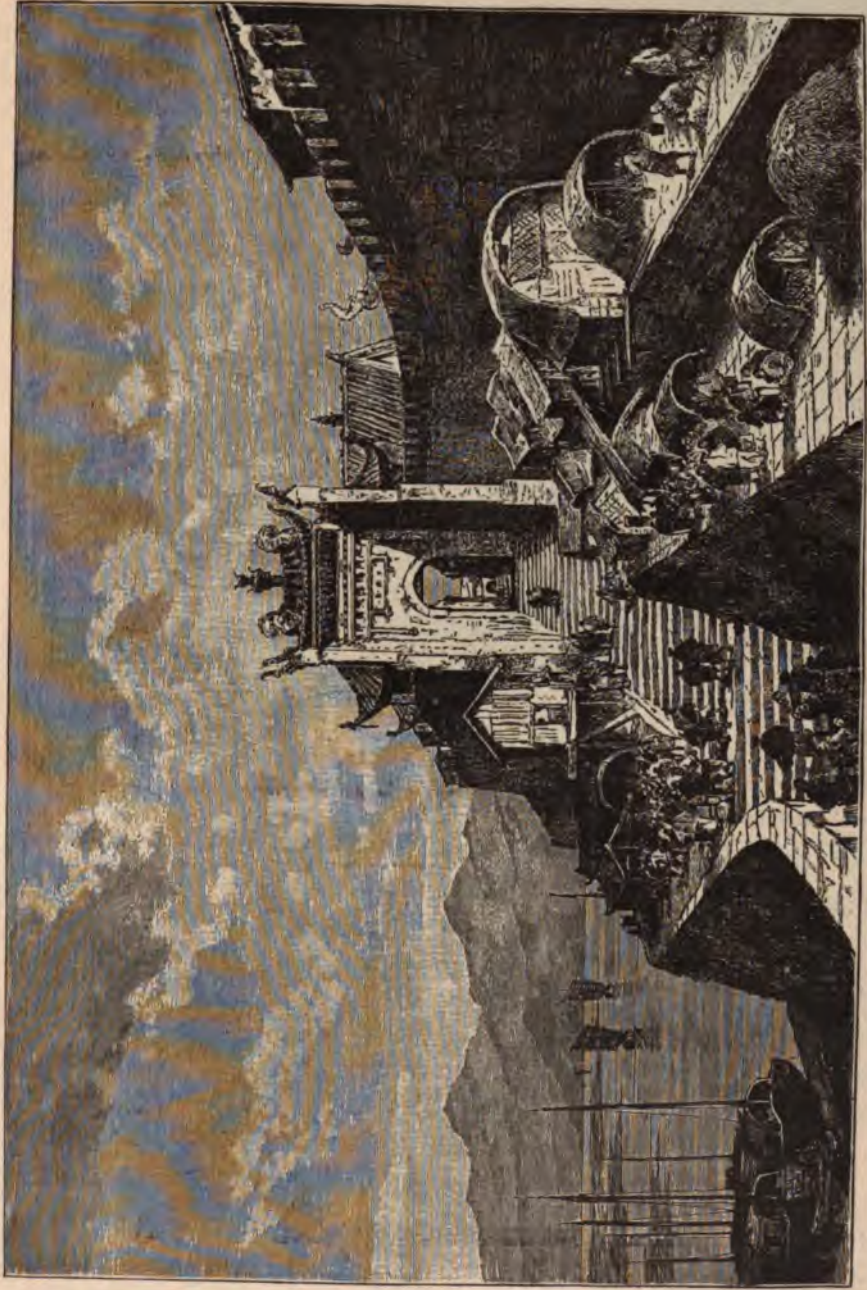
Paul lay trembling in Scott's arms, sobbing and shuddering, as cry and clash and heavy thud marked the course of the brief struggle.

It was death without quarter for the pirate, and a rich reward from the government as the result. Only a few of the crew were left alive, and well bound, hand and foot, and all that Scott and Paul really saw of it was after their palanquin prison had been carried in triumph to the mandarin junk and there opened, amid the shouts of the soldiers and the joyful exclamations of the captain, who had changed a certain ruin to the most glorious success of his life, and the secretary, who had transposed a doom to the most ignominious death to a certainty of the life-long gratitude of the governor of Kweilin.

What the boys saw were three bodies, stretched upon the deck, grim, ghastly, yet exerting over them such a powerful fascination that irresistibly they approached them. One was the pirate captain, they passed it with a shudder; the next was the quartermaster of the "Tigress"; and the third was the body of the half-caste engineer and foreman. Tao-sen already stood there when they approached. Modesty, perhaps, had kept him from being the first to greet his young masters, after their deliverance, and possibly that strange fascination had overpowered him, too, as he saw his ghost of the "Tigress" and the fiend who had haunted him so long, lying now, dead and helpless, at his feet.

He did not notice Scott's approach. He was muttering to himself, but as, in spirit at least, he was addressing men from the western sea, he was talking to them in English.

"My welly welly solly *you*," he said, striking the half-caste's body with his bare foot. "You no b'long ghost. My tinkee more better you talkee datee thing, allee same day my catchee



THE ROYAL ENTRANCE.

bleff, top side ofilum. You no b'long ghost." Then he turned to the quartermaster's body and kicked it more scornfully. "Good by, you Mellican man. Why for you no die fus time? Gottee fuslate long lifee you. Knife all blood. My talkee, 'Tao-sen you welly luck boy. Nightee time, no man see, you killee he.' Jus now you come top side nodder time. No go. Welly welly solly. Evlybody look *see fight*. My come cleepy all over datee one piecee boat. Mixes all evlyting. Lope all litee no more. Sail he no go up. Sail no come down. Maskee, you pull dis one piecee pigtail no more. "

Here Tao-sen felt for his pigtail, and started back to find it had disappeared, having forgotten how firmly he had bound the queue over his shaven pate when he disguised himself to take the place of the man who had held the helm, as a last resort, and the only thing that was left him to put out of order, after daylight rendered his other operations impossible. As he started he noticed Scott standing beside him. He stammered and drew back, but Scott extended his hand, and with tears in his eyes he said, earnestly, —

"Ling! if it had not been for you, once, twice, three times Paul would not have been alive and safe."

He would have said more, but Tao-sen, quite overcome, fell upon his face, and clasping Scott's foot he moaned, "My b'long jus one welly poor piecee Cheenaman, evlybodee kickee, evlybody pullee pigtail. Jus now come along Master Paul, he welly, welly good poor my."

And here Tao-sen began to sob, till he, too, could not speak.

The mandarin junk sailed on, with the pirate junk behind, till it overtook the silk junk, and acting as a true representative of the government should, it recaptured it, and completed thus the most remarkable voyage which the captain had ever made;

one which would raise him, somewhere, who could tell where, and in prospect he was one of the happiest Chinamen the boys had met in all their journey, as before them rose the royal outpost of Shanghai. He did not even stop to think that his junk was not decorated with flags and streamers as he had promised, but through the forest of shipping, steamers from all parts of



THE DISTANT GOAL.

the globe, junks from all parts of China, and small craft without number, he made his way to the wharf.

Shanghai! A European port! Steamers! Flags! Ay, and the Stars and Stripes! Hot tears filled Scott's eyes as he looked, till the whole was lost. He only felt Paul's hand in his, and clasping it, almost crushing it in his gratitude, he whispered, "Thank God! Thank God! He has saved us!"

"I told you so down at Wucheun," said Paul, a little carelessly. "Just look at those funny people on the wharf." He was pointing to a party of Europeans. "What funny clothes!"

"They are Americans, I think," said Scott.

"But we did n't look like *that*, did we? I believe I'd rather be Chinese."

"Hush, Paul! Hush!" said Scott, faintly.



ON THE WHARVES OF SHANGHAI.

On the crowded wharves they were quite as much alone as in Wucheun, but now a joy as great as the sorrow before filled Scott's heart, as with Tao-sen marching proudly behind them


the two boys started to walk — somewhere, to find something, a hotel, first of all, which they could now afford to do, with the money from Paul's belt, before they had the baggage taken from the junk.

They had scarcely walked a rod when a deep voice behind them exclaimed, 'Scott Clayton!'

"Oh, Mr. Raymond!" cried Scott, as he sprang into the arms of his friend.

CHAPTER XXII.

OUR BOYS IN CHINA.

“ND so I have found you at last, after long months of searching, and almost giving up,” said Richard Raymond, as they sat in comfortable apartments in the hotel. “Two Chinamen, I find you, and Paul as much of a Chinese as he was a Hindu up in the mountains. And you’ve seen China with no help from any one, from her tea-fields to her—”

“We have n’t seen a tea-field!” interrupted Paul.

“That’s a fact,” said Scott, “but I never thought of it before. We’ve been through a big piece of China and don’t know anything about raising tea.”

“I do,” said Paul, “I picked tea leaves and filled my pockets with them because they smelled good in India.”

“You’re right, Paul, I guess you did, for it grows where you went there,” said Richard Raymond, smiling, “and you’re the best kind of a boy to see anything, for you remember it.” Then turning to Scott, he asked, “Well, what do you think of China?”

“Taking out ugly foreigners who go loafing round and making trouble, I think it’s first-rate,” said Scott, warmly. “There can’t be many countries where two shipwrecked fellows would be treated as kindly as we have been. I tell you, it would hurt the missions some if our people knew the best things about the Chinese.”

"It did n't stop Paul from going as a missionary to Rome and Athens because the Greeks and Italians were the most enlightened people on the earth," Richard replied.

"I never was a missionary and I never went to Rome," replied Paul, indignantly.

Richard laughed. "I was talking of another Paul just then," he said; "but after all, you've been more of a missionary than you thought for."

"Well, I've got these papers for papa all safe," he said triumphantly, producing the precious package. "When are we going home?"

"To-morrow morning early, my dear boy, and I am going with you this time to see that you don't get yourselves lost again."

"Good!" cried Scott.

"And Tao-sen is going, too," said Paul.

They had not thought of that. But Paul said it, and said it in that quiet way which convinced the half-caste in the ruins that he was not afraid of him, which convinced the governor of Kweilin that his little self was not to be ignored, which at once convinced Richard Raymond and Scott that Tao-sen was going to America.

Mr. Raymond laughed, and asked, "Is there nothing more which you would like to take, Sir Hari-Paul?"

Ah, that name! It touched the deepest, tenderest chord in his being, and with tears in his blue eyes he replied, "I should like, best of all, to take my own Dhondaram."

There was joy in one home, at least, in Boston, that day, early in March, when Benjamin Clayton, now entirely recovered from his serious illness, came hurrying into the house at the

most unusual hour of noon, and shouted from the hall, that every one everywhere might hear, —

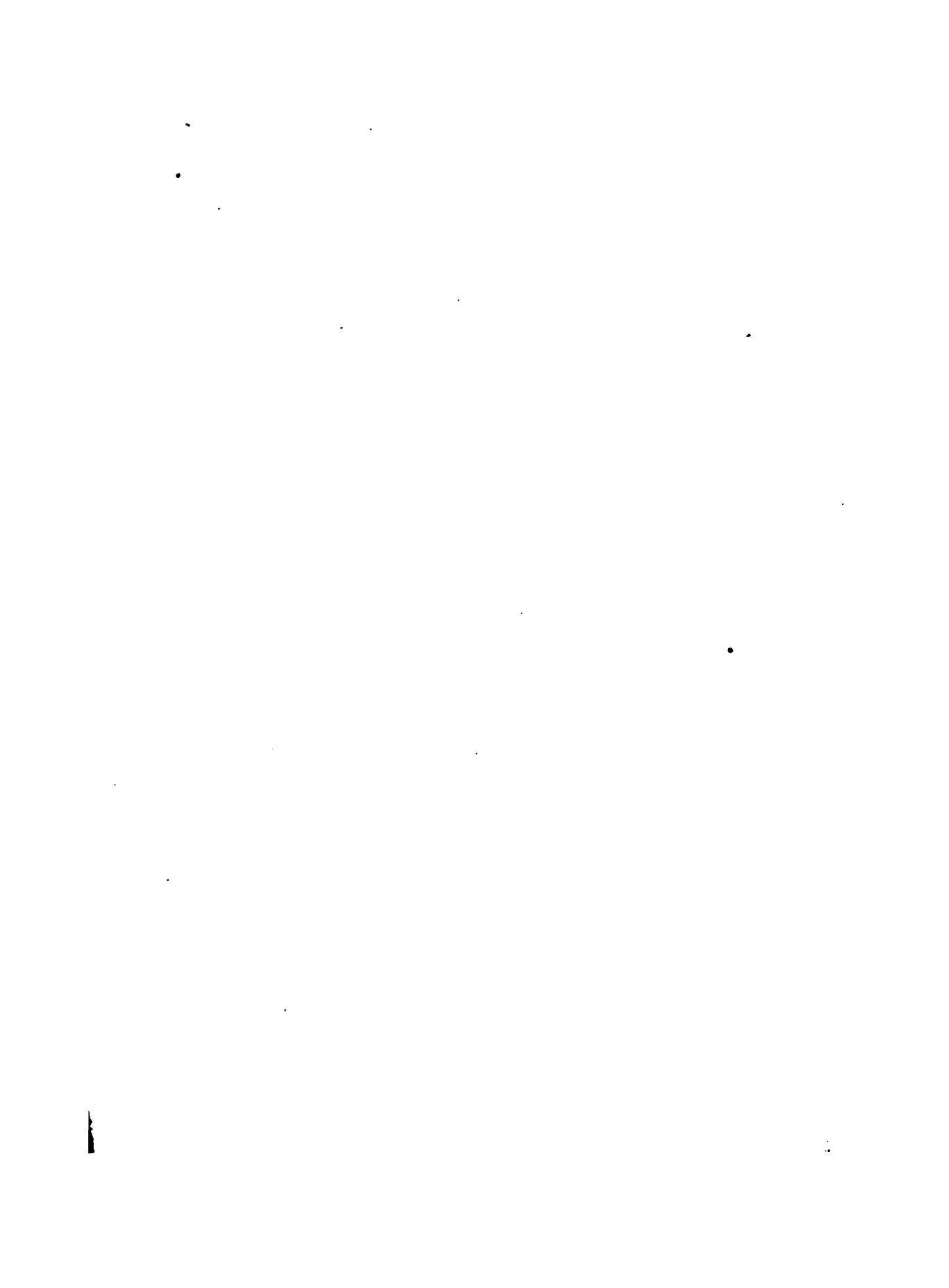
“Our boys are safe in China.” And he waved a cable message joyfully over his head, —

“Scott and Paul are well. We shall sail from Shānghai to-morrow.

“RICHARD RAYMOND.”

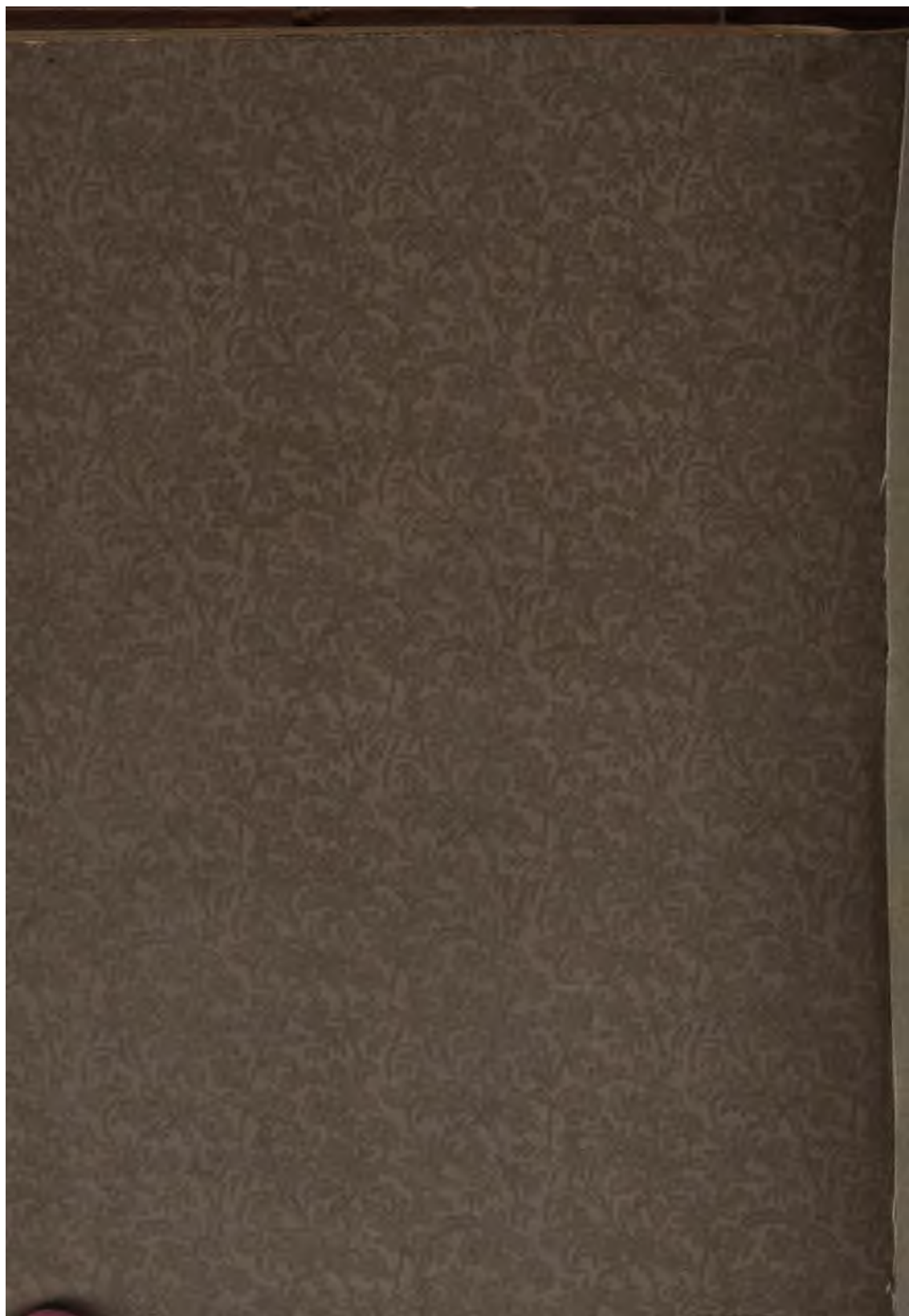


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